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ABSTRACT

Focusing on the need to restore public confidence in the American educational system, this manual presents ideas, information, and strategies to assist educators in developing and improving school-community relations. It contains 160 short instructional outlines organized into 9 units: (1) Basic Concepts of Home-School-Community Relations; (2) Demographic Trends That Affect Public Education; (3) School and Home as Partners; (4) Advisory Committees and Volunteer Programs; (5) Community Power Structure and Political Realities; (6) Partnerships and Collaboration; (7) Two-Way Communication: Listening and Telling; (8) Planning and Evaluating a Public Relations Program; and (9) Tracking Issues and Responding to Crisis. Each unit contains a list of suggested readings. A list of relevant national organizations and information sources is included. (MDM)

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RELATIONS

Trainers Manual & Study Guide

By Larry E. Decker & Associates
Mid-Atlantic Center for Community Education
Curry School of Education
University of Virginia

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HOME-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

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by
Larry E. Decker & Associates

Mid-Atlantic Center for Community Education
Curry School of Education
University of Virginia

March 1994
National Review Edition

OVERVIEW

The materials in this manual have been collected, adapted, condensed, or developed over the past five years for use in graduate classes in school-community relations and community education as well as in units on educational partnerships and parent-community involvement. Individual sections have been used separately for presentations and workshops targeted to specific professional and community groups.

More than 30 colleagues in the Community Education Computer Network (CENET) have provided comments and suggestions for this publication which is directed primarily toward the training of teachers and administrators in American public schools. It may be used for reference, as the basis of a course, or as individual units for topical presentations.

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UNIT I

BASIC CONCEPTS OF HOME-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The premise of providing training in a content area called "Home-School-Community Relations" is obvious: schools don't operate in a vacuum. If people who work in schools expect to be successful in their primary mission of educating the community's children, they need to know a great deal about the community and the families from which the children come.

Like many things in public education, that proposition is not as simple as it sounds. For one thing, no two communities are exactly alike. For another, different communities influence schools in different ways. And finally, communities and families are constantly changing in a variety of ways, some of them highly gratifying and others thoroughly discouraging.

The past 10 years have been challenging indeed for public educators. They have been chastised for rising dropout rates and falling test scores; for a shortage of good teachers; and for a surplus of public school graduates who lack basic skills. The crisis in confidence has been more painful and prolonged than the one that followed the Soviet launch of sputnik, and there are no men-on-the-moon in training.

The urge for a quick fix has been almost irresistible. Politicians have made heroes of principals with bullhorns and symbols of schools that cashed in their auto repair shops for computer labs. In a frantic search for easy answers, some critics have been willing to overlook an inconvenient but undeniable fact: educational problems reflect community and family problems in all their complexity, diversity, and intractability. In too many communities, children are hungry, sick, abused, or neglected. Most Americans would concede that bullhorns and computers are not the answers.

Of course we need strong schools, literate and law-abiding youth, and competitive workers for the new global economy. The goal of improving public schools is about as controversial as motherhood and apple pie. But the facts are that most taxpayers no longer have children in public schools and that many taxpayers no longer trust public educators to spend their tax dollars wisely. Public school teachers and administrators who ignore skeptical taxpayers and the almost 80 percent of households without children do so at their own peril. They will pay a heavy price as public support erodes further in the years ahead. And school systems that do not develop policies and programs to involve families and communities as educational allies will not make much progress in their reform efforts.

Is it possible to restore public confidence in our unique American system of free public education for all? That is the question and the challenge. We must begin by defining the essential role of home and community, with an assessment of where we are now in terms of understanding that role.

INSTRUCTIONAL OUTLINES

Following are instructional outlines and group activities that could be used by trainers in a variety of settings or by students in group discussions or study sessions.

I-1. Why the Education Reform Movement Is Here to Stay

Education has been compared to a failing business:

- It has a product many clients are not sure they really want.
- It makes little serious investment in technology or in research and development.
- It is not designed to serve its clients.
- It has a top-heavy bureaucracy.
- Its labor-management relations are appalling.
- It is reliant on captive markets.
- It does not have a collaborative system of addressing problems.
- Its organizational structure and problem-solving mechanisms are traditional and hierarchical.
- It resists innovation and change.
- Most of its professional staff (teachers) are isolated from each other.
- It tends to wall itself off from its key stakeholders—parents and the business community.
- It is viewed as a "closed shop."
- It is dependent on the support of an aging population.
- It is unprepared to compete in a global market.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993.

Suggested Group Activity

In small groups (4-5 people), discuss/debate the preceding statements. Are the statements true? Are other factors important in the debate over school reform and restructuring?

I-2. Education's Misleading Myths

Myths about the American public schools may be misleading the majority of citizens and undermining the confidence of the American people in our schools.

- Myth 1. Today's youth do not seem as smart as recent generations.
  Fact: Today's students actually average about 15 IQ points higher than their grandparents did, and average about 7 points higher than their parents.
- Myth 2. Today's youth cannot think as well as recent generations.
  Fact: The large gains in measured intelligence throughout the industrialized world have not been in the areas of the tests that call for general knowledge, or for verbal or quantitative ability. The major gains in intelligence test performance have been primarily in the areas of general problem-solving skills and the ability to handle abstract information of a decontextualized nature—in the areas generally labeled "thinking skills."
- Myth 3. The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) has shown a marked decrease in mean score over the last 25 years, indicating the failure of our schools and our teachers in performing their function.
  Fact: Although, since 1965 there has been a decline in the average SAT score for our nation's youth, the explanation for this loss is simple—a much greater number of

students in the bottom 60 percent of their class have been taking the SAT since the 1960s.

- MYTH 4. The bottom students now score better on achievement tests, but there has been a decrease in the performance of the better students. Our top students are not as proficient as they were.

  FACT: The SAT performance of all test takers between 1975 and 1990 is unusually stable over this time period. But if from the overall pool of test takers, we separate the performance of students from 1975 to 1990 who match those who formerly took the SAT test (primarily white, suburban, middle and upper middle class, higher school rank, etc.) we see an increase of over 30 SAT points, and increase of over 10 percentile ranks compared to the overall and undifferentiated group of SAT takers.

- MYTH 5. The performance of American students on standardized achievement test reveals gross inadequacies.

  FACT: Scientists reviewing the National Assessment of Educational Progress test, given to a national sample of 9-, 13-, and 17-year-olds in the subject matters of mathematics, science, reading, writing, geography, and computer skills, believe unequivocally that the national data does not indicate a decline in any area, and that students today appear to be as well educated as previous generations of students.

- MYTH 6. Money is unrelated to the productivity of schools.

  FACT: States that had spent the most on their schools had produced American citizens who had earned the most dollars in income; also higher salaries attract teaching candidates with higher academic ability and higher salaries keep those teachers in the profession longer.

- MYTH 7. The American public school system is a bloated bureaucracy, top heavy in administrators and administrative costs.

  FACT: The average number of employees that each administrator supervises in education is among the highest of any industry or business in the U.S.; central office professionals plus principals, assistant principals, and supervisors comprise 4.5 percent of the total employee population of the schools.

- MYTH 8. American schools are too expensive. We spend more on education than any other country in the world, and we have little to show for it.

  FACT: In 1988 dollars, we rank ninth among 16 industrialized nations in per-pupil expenditures in grades K-12—14 percent less than Germany, 30 percent less than Japan, and 51 percent less than Switzerland. If we were to come up to the average percentage of per capita income of the 16 other industrialized nations, we would have to invest an additional $20 billion per year in K-12 education.

- MYTH 9. Our high schools, colleges, and universities are not supplying us with enough mathematicians and scientists to maintain our competitiveness in world markets.

  FACT: There is solid data to suggest that the supply is exceeding demand; when demand as well as supply is investigated, it shows that the economy is now able to absorb all the scientists and engineers that we produce.

- MYTH 10. The United States is an enormous failure in the international comparisons of educational achievement.

FACT: According to many visitors to the U.S., we have some of the most creative and spontaneous children the world has ever seen and these students do go on to more challenging schooling at the college level, in numbers that are the envy of the world.

- MYTH 11. American productivity has fallen and a major factor in that is the education of the work force.

  FACT: According to the 1992 report of one of our nation's most prestigious management consulting firms, there has been no decline in American productivity, although it is true that productivity in other countries has grown at a faster rate than ours. However, their productivity was historically low and their rates of increase are not nearly as steep as they approach our rate of productivity. In addition, when the various factors that can influence productivity of a nation are examined—market conditions, labor unions, government regulations, management behavior, available capital, skill of the labor force, etc—the only variable that predicted productivity across nations in the survey was behavior of management; the educational level of the labor force was unrelated to productivity.

A FINAL NOTE: We having failing schools. But in those school populations, we see poverty, inadequate health care, dysfunctional families and dysfunctional neighborhoods.

SOURCE: Berliner, D. C. "Education's Present Misleading Myths Undermine Confidence in One of America's Most Cherished Institutions," *Journal of Educational Public Relations*, Vol. 15 No. 2 (December 1993).

I-3. SCHOOL-COMMUNITY ISSUES: AN ATTITUDINAL SURVEY

Instructions: The following statements are designed to gather opinions regarding school-community issues. Indicate your response by circling one of the following responses: strongly agree (SA), agree (A), neutral (N), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD).

1.	Schools should be more involved in delivering social services.	SA A N D SD
2.	Teachers should be encouraged to visit the homes of their students.	SA A N D SD
3.	Parents should be encouraged to visit their children's classrooms.	SA A N D SD
4.	Community members should be on the committees for screening prospective principals and teachers.	SA A N D SD
5.	Home and community environments may be more important determinants of academic achievement than the school environment.	SA A N D SD
6.	School buildings should serve as before- and after-school and year-round community centers.	SA A N D SD
7.	A danger of involving community members in the schools is that ultimately they will want to control them.	SA A N D SD
8.	Volunteers are of limited value in schools.	SA A N D SD
9.	Special-interest groups create difficulties for schools.	SA A N D SD
10.	Almost all school systems have effective programs and activities that facilitate home-school-community communication.	SA A N D SD

11. Community members should be part of the decision-making mechanism in the school. SA A N D SD

12. Teachers should be empowered to make curriculum and instructional decisions. SA A N D SD

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993.

Suggested Group Activity

For a large group or class, have everyone complete the above survey. Then, taking one question at a time, have individuals indicate their responses by a show of hands. Ask those who indicated SA or A to give the rationale for their response and then do the same with those who responded D or SD. To avoid a heated debate, ask to hear only one side of the issue at a time.

I-4. Understanding Your Community

In order to work effectively in a community, you need to know:

- Population data and characteristics.
- Customs and traditions.
- Political system characteristics and organization.
- Communications channels.
- Significant community groups and organizations.
- Economic conditions.
- Patterns of employment/unemployment.
- Political structures and power brokers (both formal and informal).
- Social structures, tensions, and problems that affect the learner and the school.
- Community resources and services.
- School-community interrelationships.
- Geographic strengths and weaknesses.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout, Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993.

I-5. An Effective Community Is Different

A community that is effective in solving its problems is different in at least five ways:

- It educates itself *as a whole*, in all its subdivisions and groups, about the *whole* of its interests; it has a picture of how the parts fit together.
- It has available a special kind of *shared public information* that goes beyond "the facts"; it knows what the facts mean in the lives of the diverse people who make up the community.
- It talks not *about* issues, but *through* issues to generate shared knowledge; it has learned that people don't usually work through problems together unless they have talked through them first.
- It knows the difference between mass opinion and "public judgment," which involves reasoning together and is more *reflective* than *reactive*.
- It is different in the way it thinks about leadership—public leadership—and makes a distinction between government officials and public leaders; it knows that *public*

leadership is needed for the education of the community about the community's business.

SOURCE: Mathews, D., President, Kettering Foundation, in Decker, L. E., and Associates, *Community Education: Building Learning Communities*. Alexandria, VA: National Community Education Association, 1990.

I-6. Ten Ingredients of a Healthy Community

- Wholeness incorporating diversity.
- A reasonable base of shared values, customs, and traditions (ideas, attitudes, habits).
- Effective internal communication.
- Caring, trust, and teamwork.
- Participation.
- Affirmation.
- Links beyond the community.
- The development of young people.
- A forward view.
- Institutional arrangements for community maintenance.

SOURCE: Gardner, J. *Building Community*. Washington, DC: Independent Sector, 1991.

I-7. Community Analysis: Social Vitality

A socially vital community has:

- Many collective events with high levels of participation.
- Many collective events internally organized and controlled.
- Many services provided or acquired through internal and informal networks.
- Informal social networks that emerge in times of stress and times of joy.
- Very few members socially isolated from other members of the community.
- Persisting structures of internal government.
- The capability of organizing to respond to an impacting event.

SOURCE: Adapted from Rotenberg, R. L. "Community Analysis Techniques: An Anthropologist's Perspective," in *Marketing Techniques for School Districts*, edited by J.J. Lane. Reston, VA: Association of School Business Officials, International, 1986, 57.

I-8. Community Analysis: Competency

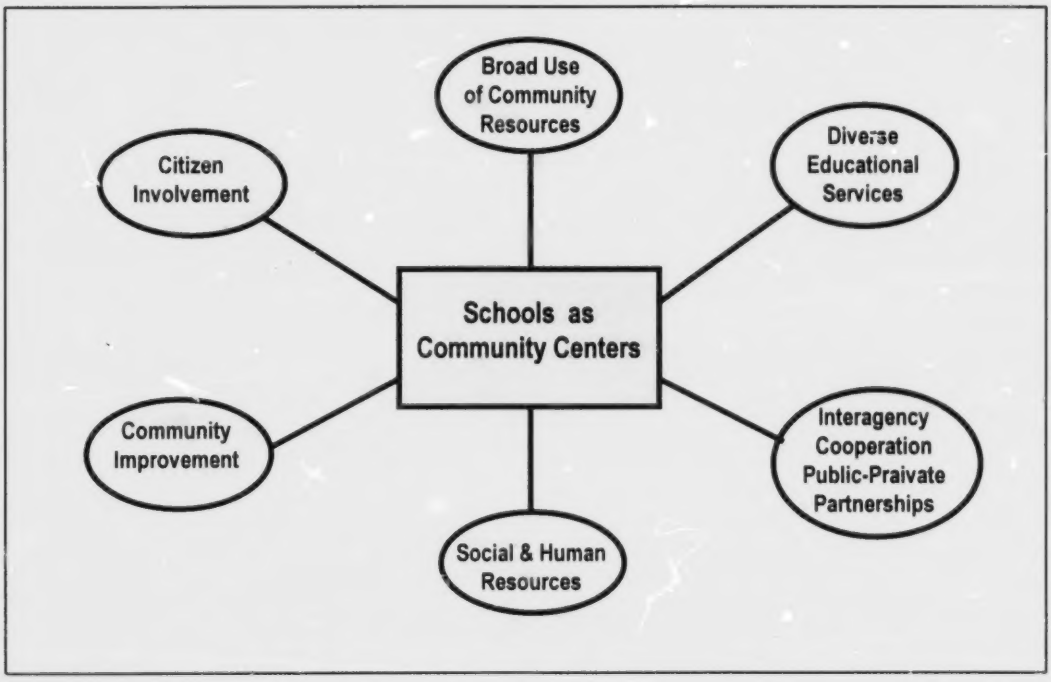
A competent community:

- Collaborates on identifying problems and needs.
- Actively seeks diverse input.
- Establishes consensus on goals and priorities.
- Agrees on strategies for meeting agreed-upon goals.
- Has strong psychological identification.
- Allows individuals to play significant roles.
- Has past record of positive results.
- Has members who possess effective communications skills.

- Effectively uses outside expertise while retaining community control and direction.

SOURCE: Adapted from Rotenberg, R. L. "Community Analysis Techniques: An Anthropologist's Perspective," in *Marketing Techniques for School Districts*, edited by J.J. Lane. Reston, VA: Association of School Business Officials, International, 1986, 57.

I-9. Schools as Community Centers



SOURCE: Decker, L. E. and Associates. *Community Education: Building Learning Communities*. Alexandria, VA: National Community Education Association, 1990.

I-10. Components of Community Education

Community education is both a philosophy of education and a process for systematic community development. Its component parts include:

- Lifelong learning opportunities.
- Systematic citizen involvement in problem solving and decision making.
- Full and efficient use of resources—physical, financial, and human.
- Cooperation and coordination among agencies and organizations to achieve integration of human and community services.
- Enhancement of human achievement and improvement of community.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993.

I-11. Principles of Community Education

Community education provides local residents and community agencies and institutions the opportunity to become active partners in addressing community concerns. It is based on the following principles:

- SELF-DETERMINATION. Local people have a right and a responsibility to be involved in determining community needs and identifying community resources that can be used to address those needs.
- SELF-HELP. People are best served when their capacity to help themselves is encouraged and developed. When people assume responsibility for their own well-being, they become part of the solution and build independence rather than dependence.
- LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT. The training of local leaders in such skills as problem solving, decision making, and group process is essential for ongoing self-help and community improvement efforts.
- LOCALIZATION. Services, programs, and other community involvement opportunities that are close to where people live have the greatest potential for a high level of public participation. Whenever possible, these activities should be decentralized to locations of easy public access.
- INTEGRATED DELIVERY OF SERVICES. Organizations and agencies that operate for the public good can meet their own goals and better serve the public by collaborating with other organizations and agencies that are working toward common goals.
- MAXIMUM USE OF RESOURCES. Full use of the physical, financial, and human resources of every community must be coordinated if the diverse needs and interests of the community are to be met effectively and without duplication.
- INCLUSION. Community programs, activities, and services should involve the broadest possible cross section of community residents. The segregation or isolation of people by age, income, social class, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, or handicapping condition inhibits the full development of the community.
- INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIVENESS. Public institutions exist to serve the public and therefore are obligated to develop programs and services that meet continuously changing public interests.
- LIFELONG LEARNING. Learning begins at birth and continues until death. Formal and informal learning opportunities should be available to residents of all ages in a wide variety of community settings.

SOURCE: Horyna, L. and Decker, L. E. "Restructuring School with the Forgotten Solution," in Decker, L. E. and Romney, V. A. *Educational Restructuring and the Community Education Process.* Charlottesville, VA: Mid-Atlantic Center for Community Education, 1992.

I-12. School-Community Relations: Ideas and Practices

- Good community relations are a way of life expressed daily by staff members in their personal relationships with colleagues, pupils, parents, and community members.
- School-community relations are a planned and continuing series of activities for communicating with both internal and external publics concerning the purposes, needs, programs, and accomplishments of the school.

- School-community relations involve a continuing series of activities designed to find out what citizens think of schools and what aspirations they have for the education of the community's children and adults.
- School-community relations require the active involvement of citizens in the decision-making process of the school, so that essential improvements and adjustments may be made in the educational program in response to social changes.

SOURCE: Bagin, D.; Ferguson, D.; and Marx, G. *Public Relations for Administrators*. Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators, 1988.

I-13. School Community Relations Processes

- COMMUNICATION. One- and two-way written and verbal interaction between the school and its various segments and stakeholders. Typical communication activities include parent-teacher conferences, newsletters, and home visits.
- INVOLVEMENT. The contribution of time, energy, money, expertise, and other resources to the school. Typical involvement activities include fundraisers, room parents, booster clubs, and volunteers.
- PARTICIPATION. Decision-making activity affecting school policy or practices or a specific child's relationship with the school.
- RESOLUTION. Problem-solving activity that reduces or eliminates actual or potential conflict between the school and its market segments and stakeholders. Potential targets of conflict-resolution efforts might include disputed disciplinary actions, special education placements, and questionable instructional practices.

SOURCE: Wanat, C. L. and Bowles, D. B. "School-Community Relations: A Process Paradigm," *Community Education Journal*. Vol. XX No.2 (Winter 1993).

I-14. Educational Public Relations Defined

- Educational public relations is a planned and systematic two-way process of communication between an educational organization and its internal and external publics.
- Educational public relations stimulates a better public understanding of the role, objectives, and accomplishments of the educational organization and the needs, concerns, and interests of the public it serves.
- Educational public relations is primarily a management function that:
  - informs the public;
  - interprets public attitudes;
  - identifies the policies and procedures of an organization with the corresponding public interest; and
  - executes a program of action to encourage public involvement and to earn public understanding and acceptance.

SOURCE: Adapted from National School Public Relations Association. "Tip Sheets," Arlington, VA, 1984.

I-15. Characteristics of an Effective Educational Public Relations Program

An effective program:

- Is planned and continuous.
- Is a systematic two-way process of communication.
- Involves listening, responding, and interpreting public attitudes.
- Encourages community involvement to earn public understanding and acceptance.
- Is attentive to both internal and external publics.
- Is open and honest.
- Is recognized as essential by management.
- Involves issues management and strategy development.
- Stresses personal communication.
- Employs user-friendly language and avoids jargon.
- Stimulates understanding of roles, objectives, and accomplishments.

SOURCE: Bagin, D.; Ferguson, D.; and Marx, G. *Public Relations for Administrators*. Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators, 1988.

I-16. Public Relations Planning

Communication

- Who needs to know?
- What do they need to know?
- How will they find out?

Listening

- Whose advice or support do we need? Who is affected?
- What do we want to know?
- How will we seek ideas, concerns, questions, or suggestions?

Building a case

- Gather the facts.
- Determine where you stand and why.
- Identify what the program means to the community (the benefits).
- Develop a case.
- Compose a basic message.
- Address the undecided.
- Develop a theme or rallying cry.
- Listen and be responsive.

SOURCE: Marx, G., Senior Associate Executive Director, American Association of School Administrators (Lecture and handout, Falls Church, VA, July 1993).

I-17. Personal Public Relations

An individual's personal public relations can have a positive or negative impact on an organization's public relations efforts.

- First impressions
  Do they matter?
- Ethical behavior: the big two—
  money and sex

- Interpersonal communication
  - Learning to listen
  - The meaning of tact
- Nonverbal communication
- Writing styles and skills
- Listening behavior and misbehavior
- Personal confidence
- Presentations and public speaking

SOURCE: Adapted from Bagin, D.; Ferguson, D.; and Marx, G. *Public Relations for Administrators*. Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators, 1988.

I-18. Why Community Involvement?

- The basic reason for seeking community involvement is that people tend to feel *committed* to any decision or action to the extent that they participated in making or choosing it. Their personal experience influences their attitudes.
- The reverse is also true. People tend to feel *uncommitted* to a decision or action to the extent that they feel others made it for them or imposed it on them.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993.

I-19. Personal Experiences that Influence Attitudes toward Schools

The personal experiences people have with schools have a profound influence on their attitudes, and their attitudes influence their behavior. The following are some of the ways in which people have personal experiences with schools.

- As former students.
- First impression of a new school.
- Reception received at a school.
- First contact when there is a problem.
- Immediacy of response to parental concerns.
- A child's success or lack of success.
- Experience serving as a volunteer.
- Contact with teacher or lack of contact.
- Parent-teacher conferences.
- Parent group meetings.
- Behavior of children in the neighborhood.

SOURCE: Marx, G., Senior Associate Executive Director, American Association of School Administrators (Lecture and handout, Falls Church, VA, July 1993).

I-20. Home-School-Community Involvement Strategies

Strategy I: Increase the use of community resources and volunteers to augment the educational program in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade.

Strategy II. Develop educational partnerships between the school system and public and private service providers, business and industry, and civic and social service organizations.

Strategy III. Use public educational facilities as community service centers to help meet the educational, social, health, cultural, and recreational needs of community residents of all ages and sectors.

Strategy IV. Develop an environment that fosters lifelong learning.

Strategy V. Establish community involvement processes in educational planning and decision making.

Strategy VI. Provide a responsive, community-based support system for collective action by all educational and community agencies to address both specialized needs and quality-of-life issues of all citizens.

Strategy VII. Develop a system that expedites home-school-community communication.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. and Decker,V. A. *Home-School-Community Involvement.* Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators, 1988.

I-21. Climate Inventory

These 10 assessment factors can be used to stimulate discussion and develop a profile of the school system's overall climate of communication and collaboration.

1. The school system and individual schools have planned and written programs of internal and external communication. YES OR NO
2. All staff members have specific responsibilities in the school's program. YES OR NO
3. Goal setting and evaluation are shared processes in the school community. YES OR NO.
4. The school system makes full use of commercial media and its own channels of communication to orient citizens about the achievements of the schools and the challenges facing them. YES OR NO
5. Each school has a variety of opportunities for parent involvement and parent-student-teacher interaction. YES OR NO
6. The system and the schools recognize the achievements of students, staff, and citizens in a variety of ways. YES OR NO
7. Non-parents have opportunities to learn about schools, participate in activities, and receive services. YES OR NO
8. Major employers of the school's graduates have opportunities to give feedback, suggestions, and comments. YES OR NO
9. Staff members participate in a cross section of community organizations and activities. YES OR NO
10. The school-community communication program is evaluated annually. YES OR NO

SOURCE: Holliday, A. Schools-Community: Guidelines for Effective Communication. New Cumberland, PA: Pennsylvania School Boards Association, 1986.

I-22. Linking Community Education Philosophy and Public Relations Techniques

Community Education Goals	Public Relations Tools
•Build learning communities	•Internal and interpersonal communication
•Increase community involvement	•Publicity
•Encourage cooperative planning and decision making	•Marketing
	•Publications
•Expand use of facilities	•Use of mass media
•Coordinate and integrate service delivery	•Issues management
•Promote lifelong learning	•Crisis communications/containment

- Improve quality of life
- Facilitate interagency cooperation
- Develop school-business partnerships
- Special needs
- Audio-visuals

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993.

SUGGESTED GROUP ACTIVITY

- A student is seriously hurt in a fight with a student of a different race. Describe how this situation might play out in a traditional school with a traditional public relations program. Then describe how the same situation might play out in a community school with a well-established public relations program.

- Develop a set of indicators you could use to determine the level of community education development in a community. After sharing those indicators with other groups, make a final list.

RECOMMENDED READING

Bagin, D.; Ferguson, D.; and Marx, G. *Public Relations for Administrators*. Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators, 1988.

Crowson, R. L. *School-Community Relations, Under Reform*. Berkeley, CA: McCutchan, 1992.

Decker, L. E. and Associates. *Community Education: Building Learning Communities*. Alexandria, VA: National Community Education Association, 1990.

Wanat, C. L. and Bowles, B. D. "School-Community Relations: A Process Paradigm," *Community Education Journal*, XX, 2 (Winter 1993).

UNIT II

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS THAT AFFECT PUBLIC EDUCATION

Not so long ago, public schools first encountered children when they were five or six years old. What these little ones had experienced over the preceding years was assumed to be benign and appeared to be of little interest to teachers and administrators. Now, every educator is acutely aware of the critical importance of a child's early years, even while acknowledging that public institutions can't control everything that happens to a child between birth and kindergarten. What schools can do is *help*, by working with parents and families as early as possible, trying to improve family literacy and parenting skills and build strong, positive relationships between families and schools.

A brief examination of the demographics of American society at the end of the 20th century shows the enormity of the challenge educators face. Most striking is the growth in the incidence of poverty in the youngest segments of our population. The Children's Defense Fund points out regularly that children in all age groups are poorer today than they were at the beginning of the decade, and that between now and the year 2000, the growth in child population will consist of poor children.

Reliable research has demonstrated a link between poverty and the patterns of behavior associated with school failure. Fortunately, research also has shown that there *are* things schools can do, working with the home and community, to improve the school performance, and therefore, the life chances, of all children.

The first step is to develop a thorough knowledge of the community's demographics and an understanding of how they affect the work of the public educator. That is the focus of this unit.

INSTRUCTIONAL OUTLINES

Following are instructional outlines and group activities that could be used by trainers in a variety of settings or by students in group discussions or study sessions.

II-1. U.S. POPULATION GROWTH AND DECLINE

(By age group, from 1980 to 1990)

AGE GROUPS THAT GOT LARGER	
35 to 44	+33.8%
85 and over	+28.0%
75 to 84	+20.3%
25 to 34	+16.8%
65 to 74	+13.4%
under 5	+11.6%
45 to 54	+ 2.1%
55 to 64	+ 1.5%

AGE GROUPS THAT GOT SMALLER	
5 to 13	- 1.1%
18 to 24	- 9.7%
14 to 17	-11.0%

SOURCE: Hodgkinson, H. *The Same Client: The Demographics of Education and Service Delivery Systems.* Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership, 1989.

II-2. THE TRADITIONAL AMERICAN FAMILY, 1955-1992

1955 60% of households in U.S. consisted of a traditional family:
- -Working father and housewife mother
- -Two or more school-age children

1980 11% of U.S. households consisted of a traditional family.

1985 7% of U.S. households consisted of a traditional family.

1992 6% of U.S. households consisted of a traditional family.

Of every 100 children born in the U.S. in 1986:
- The parents of 40 will divorce before the children are 18.
- 12 were born out of wedlock.
- 2 will have a parent die before the children reach 18.
- Only 41 will reach 18 living with the two original parents.

SOURCE: Hodgkinson, H. *The Same Client: The Demographics of Education and Service Delivery Systems.* Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership, 1989.

II-3. CHANGES IN HOUSEHOLD TYPE, 1980-1990

	1990 NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS (thousands)	% CHANGE 1980-90
Total households	93,347	+15.5%
Married couples, no children*	27,780	+15.0%
Married couples w/ children*	24,537	- 1.7%
Single parent* — women	6,599	+21.2%
Single parent* — men	1,153	+87.2%
Singles living alone	22,999	+25.7%
Singles living with non-relatives	4,258	+45.3%

*Children under age 18

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, *Current Population Survey: Household and Family Characteristics,* Washington, DC, 1991.

II-4. Projections of U.S. Population Age 0-17, 1990-2010 (millions)

Youth	1990	2010	% Change
Total youth*	64.4	64.9	+0.5
White, non-Hispanic	45.2	41.4	-3.8
Hispanic (of any race)	7.2	9.8	+2.6
Black**	10.2	11.4	+1.2
Other races**	2.2	2.8	+0.6

Increase in total nonwhite youth	+4.4 million
Decrease in total white youth	-3.8 million

*May not add exactly because of rounding.
**Includes small number of Hispanics; "other races" are primarily Asian and Native American.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau as cited in National Center for Education Statistics, *Youth Indicators*, Washington, DC, 1991.

II-5. Vulnerable Family Index

In 1990, 1,689,118 families were formed with the birth of a first baby. Many of these families were immediately at risk for one or more reasons

- The mother was under 20.
- The mother had not completed high school.
- The parents were unmarried.

Of the new families formed in 1990:

- 11% had all three risk factors.
- 24% had two risk factors.
- 45% had at least one risk factor.

Children in poverty (ages 7-12, 1988) by number of risk factors

- All three risk factors 79%
- Two risk factors 48%
- One risk factor 26%
- No risk factors 8%

Children in lower half of school class (ages 7-12, 1988) by number of risk factors

- All three risk factors 58%
- Two risk factors 53%
- One risk factor 47%
- No risk factors 30%

SOURCE: Annie E. Casey Foundation. *Kids Count Data Book*. Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Social Policy, 1993.

II-6. The Troubled Children of Single-Parent Families

	Of children who live with:		
	Unmarried Mothers	Divorced Mothers	Both Parents
Live in poverty	63%	34%	11%
Repeated a grade in school	33%	23%	13%
Suspended or expelled	17%	11%	5%
In families on welfare for more than 10 years	39%	14%	n/a

(Of children in juvenile correctional facilities, 56% had lived with one parent, 28% with both parents.)

SOURCE: "The War Over Family Values," *U.S. News & World Report*, June 8, 1992, 35.

II-7. Children and Families

- Of all children born today, 23% are born outside of marriage.
- 15.3 million children live with one parent, the mother in 90% of cases:
  - -50% of white children live with a divorced mother.
  - -54% of black children live with a never-married mother.
  - -33% of Hispanic children's mothers are unmarried.
- Today, 40% of the poor are children; poverty for children aged 0-5 (now 23% of all young children) is increasing; and the increase is directly related to the fact that children are in a one parent, female-headed household.
  - -Average income for married couples with children is $36,206.
  - -Average income for female-headed households with children is $11,299.
- Regardless of race, poor young women are three to four times more likely to become unwed mothers than are affluent young women. Early childbearing is highly correlated with lower educational attainment and unemployment.

SOURCE: William T. Grant Foundation. *Youth and America's Future: A Statistical Snapshot.* Washington, DC: Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship, June 1987; Hodgkinson, H. *The Same Client.* Washington, DC. Institute for Educational Leadership, 1989.

II-8. The Feminization of Poverty

- From 1970 to 1984, the number of female-headed households with children under 18 increased by 84% among all families, and by 92% among black families.
- 35% of female-headed households lived in poverty, compared to 7% of male-headed families.
- 55% of black female-headed households lived in poverty.
- 75% of the elderly poor were women.
- 27% of all divorced and separated women were on welfare.

SOURCE: Ridings, D. S., League of Women Voters. *Citizen Participation*, 1986.

II-9. SAT Scores by Family Income

Family Income	SAT Averages Verbal	Math
Less than $10,000	353	415
$10,000 - $20,000	379	434
$20,000 - $30,000	404	452
$30,000 - $40,000	418	466
$40,000 - $50,000	430	480
$50,000 - $60,000	440	491
$60,000 - $70,000	449	500
More than $70,000	469	528

SOURCE: *U.S. News & World Report*, September 9, 1991.

II-10. Household Income in 1990 Dollars

Income Category	1980	1990	%Change
Poorest Fifth	$7,357	$6,973	-5.2
Next Poorest Fifth	16,008	16,124	+0.2
Middle Fifth	24,031	24,691	+2.7
Next Richest Fifth	32,075	34,824	+8.6
Richest Fifth	58,886	78,032	+32.5

SOURCE: Congressional Budget Office, Washington, DC, 1990.

II-11. America's Smallest School: The Family

Family background has long been recognized as a key ingredient in predicting children's educational achievement.

- Parent-Pupil Ratio. Students living with both parents have higher proficiency in school, even after controlling for other key differences.
- Home Library. The more types of reading materials there are in the home, the higher students' reading proficiency.
- Reading at Home. Students who do more reading at home are better readers.
- Watching TV. Students who watch a lot of TV have lower academic proficiency.
- Homework. The amount of homework done by students has been shown to be positively related to achievement.
- Absence from School. Student absence is directly correlated to decreased academic achievement.
- Parent Involvement. The degree to which parents talk about school and assume an active role in school matters is directly correlated to student achievement.
- Family Resources. Income and resources in the home account substantially for children's success in school.

SOURCE: Barton, P. E. and Coley, R. J. *America's Smallest School: The Family*. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service, 1992.

Suggested Group Activity

Given the overwhelming evidence that families have a powerful influence on student achievement, suggest some policies and programs that schools should adopt to strengthen and encourage the family role in enhancing student academic achievement.

II-12. Demographic Issues for the Year 2000

- What is "majority"? What is "minority"? The distinction is becoming a socio-economic issue, not a race issue.
- By the year 2000, one third of all children will be economically disadvantaged.
- The support base for education is eroding:
  - Only 20% of U. S. households have school-aged children.
  - American society is aging (the phenomenon of "gray power").
- Education systems need proactive, reaching-out efforts to connect community with education.
- Potential for intergenerational conflict:
  - In 1940, there were 17 workers for every Social Security recipient.
  - In 1990, there were 3 workers for every Social Security recipient.
  - In 2000, there will be only 2 workers for every Social Security recipient.
- More coordinated social services will be needed in the future, and schools will be required to fill voids.
- Growing numbers of working women will mean a growing need for comprehensive child-care services.
- Public education viewed as a right and a responsibility of all citizens requires a broader definition of education.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993.

II-13. Growing Up Is Risky Business and Schools Are Not to Blame

What causes risk:

- Personal pain
- Academic failure
- Family tragedy
- Family socio-economic situation
- Family instability

Helping students at risk:

- Understanding
- Caring
- Cultivating a sense of responsibility
- Nurturing academic achievement and skills

SOURCE: "Growing Up Is Risky Business and Schools Are Not to Blame," *Phi Delta Kappa*, 1990.

II-14. PDK/Gallup Poll - Grading the Public Schools

The annual PDK/Gallup Poll has become a primary source for measuring public attitudes toward the public schools. The 1993 poll registered the largest one-year improvement in the

grades given by the public to their local public schools since the question was first asked in 1974. The percentage of respondents awarding A's or B's jumped from 40% in 1992 to 47% in 1993, after nearly a decade of relative stability. College graduates in particular gave high ratings (54% gave an A or B).

The question: Students are often given the grades A, B, C, D, and FAIL to denote the quality of their work. Suppose the *public* schools themselves, in this community, were graded in the same way. What grade would you give the public schools here — A, B, C, D, or FAIL?

RATINGS GIVEN THE LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

GRADE	NATIONAL TOTALS	NO CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS	PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENTS	NONPUBLIC SCHOOL PARENTS
	%	%	%	%
A & B	47	44	56	37
A	10	10	12	5
B	37	34	44	32
C	31	32	28	41
D	11	10	12	9
FAIL	4	4	4	11
Don't Know	7	10	*	2

* Less than one-half of 1%.

RATINGS GIVEN THE LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

	1993 %	1992 %	1991 %	1990 %	1989 %	1988 %	1987 %	1986 %	1985 %	1984 %	1983 %
A & B	47	40	42	41	43	40	43	41	43	42	31
A	10	9	10	8	8	9	12	11	9	10	6
B	37	31	32	33	35	31	31	30	34	32	25
C	31	33	33	34	33	34	30	28	30	35	32
D	11	12	10	12	11	10	9	11	10	11	13
Fail	4	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	4	4	7
Don't Know	7	10	10	8	9	12	14	15	13	8	17

Poll respondents were also asked to grade the *nation's* public schools. As has been true in all past years, the "nation's schools" came off a poor second to "local schools" in the current poll. Whereas 47% of the public thought their own schools merit either an A or a B, only 19% awarded these grades to schools of the nation as a whole.

SOURCE: Elam, S. M.; Rose, L. C.; and Gallup, A. M. *The 25th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Polls of the Public Attitudes towards the Public Schools.* Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa, 1993.

II-15. SUMMARY OF *A LOOK AT TOMORROW*

- In 2010, four states (New York, Texas, California, and Florida) will have about one third of the nation's youth, and more than half of them will be "minority." The *real* minority will be non-Hispanic white youth in these key states. What will we call "minorities" when they make up more than half the population? And how will these states interact with Maine, which will have 3 percent minority youth in 2010?
- In the 1960s, housing moved to the suburbs. In the 1980s, so did everything else: jobs, churches, colleges, movies, and shopping. How can cities survive if we define success as moving to a suburb? What would it take to get middle income people to move back to the cities? Many "urban" problems—crime, drugs, poverty, violence—will continue to spread to the suburbs. How can we govern a metro area which includes both cities and their now-dominant suburbs?
- Currently 82 percent of all children have working mothers. Business and government must respond to the rapidly increasing demand for child care. Sixty percent of all children will spend some time with a single parent before reaching age 18, making the single parent family the new "typical American family."
- The U.S. population is aging rapidly. There are currently 30 million people over age 65, increasing to 65 million by 2020. Many will have one year of retirement for every year of work. Children under age 18 (34 percent of our population in 1970) will be 25 percent of the total population in 2000. Yet, even as children are becoming increasingly scarce, approximately 30 percent of children in 1992 are at serious risk of failure in school and in life.
- With the establishment of sizable populations of middle class blacks, Hispanics and Asians, many racial problems are actually issues of race *and* class. The single factor that holds the most children back is poverty, regardless of race.
- The U.S. population increased 10 percent between 1980 and 1990; the prison population exploded by 139 percent. Prisoners cost taxpayers more than $20,000 per individual annually, and 80 percent are high school dropouts. We now lead the world in the percentage of our population behind bars. One prisoner consumes the amount of money it would cost to enroll *six* children in Head Start programs.
- The "middle" of our society is declining, while the numbers of rich and poor are increasing. We are creating two workforces: one in minimum-wage jobs, the other in well-paying jobs. For every new job created for a computer programmer, eight new jobs are created for food service workers. This leads to an "information-rich" and "information-poor" split in our society.

- Those who are concerned about the test scores of U.S. students compared to the test scores of Asian students should compare the test scores of U.S. inner city students to the test scores of U.S. suburban students.

SOURCE: Hodgkinson, H. *A Demographic Look at Tomorrow*. Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership, 1992.

SUGGESTED GROUP ACTIVITY

- You are part of a task force brought together by your school system to look at demographic trends in your community. Identify the five most critical demographic factors and project how they will affect the educational programs in your schools for the next 3-5 years.

- Discuss the implications of having fewer students and more at-risk students risk for the workforce of the year 2000.

- Given the national demographic trends presented, project the demographics of your community in the year 2000. What are the implications for schools and schooling?

RECOMMENDED READING

Children's Defense Fund. *Falling by the Wayside: Children in Rural America*, 1992.

Children's Defense Fund. *The State of America's Children*, 1991.

Elam, S. M.; Rose, L. C., and Gallup, A. M. *The 25th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Polls of the Public Attitudes Towards the Public Schools.* Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa, 1993.

Hodgkinson, H. *A Demographic Look at Tomorrow*. Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership, 1992.

Hodgkinson, H. *The Same Client: The Demographics of Education and Service Delivery Systems.* Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership, 1989.

National Center for Children in Poverty. *Five Million Children: A Statistical Profile of Our Poorest Young Citizens.* New York, NY: Columbia University, 1993.

Wilhoit, G. "The Demand of Demographics," *Community Education Journal*, XV, 4 (July 1988).

UNIT III

SCHOOL AND HOME AS PARTNERS

Public relations professionals distinguish between internal and external publics. The distinction is important because both the method and the substance of what is communicated in any public relations effort are influenced by the intended audience. In the case of schools, the internal audience is defined as students, parents, all school employees—certified and non-certified—and school board members. The external audience is everyone else in the community.

School employees includes all staff—teachers, administrators, cooks, secretaries, custodians, aides, librarians, substitutes, bus drivers, etc. Because the knowledge and the interest levels of school employees are so varied, the methods for communicating with them must be very broad. One reason—apart from team spirit and morale—for keeping the internal public well informed is that insiders usually have a high degree of credibility in the community. It is widely—and sometimes correctly—assumed that they are reliable sources of accurate information about the schools. Whether they actually are or not depends, of course, on the effort that has been made to keep them informed. In fact, whether they are school supporters or not may depend directly on whether they are listened to, in that two-way process advocated more often than practiced in many school settings.

As for parental support, noted sociologist James Coleman believes that public school policy itself is at least partially responsible for meager parental involvement in public schools. For more than half of this century, parents were advised to leave education to the school and to the professional teacher. Parents were expected to provide financial assistance, not academic support. In the `60s and `70s, many schools tried to keep activist parents at bay and established policies designed to keep parents out of the classrooms, out of curriculum decisions, and out of the teacher's hair.

Coleman argues that schools and communities must take an active role in changing the perception that parents can disregard the day-to-day educational progress of their children. Without strong, direct intervention by the schools, Coleman believes that the situation will only get worse. Schools must do more than invite parents back into the school for regular parent-teacher conferences; they must include parents in curriculum decision making and must educate parents in their role as teaching partners. Even more important, the school must undertake the building of a community atmosphere that will support children's learning outside of school, especially when parents fail to supply time and emotional support for their children's academic progress (Coleman, "Parental Involvement in Education," OERI, 1991).

If schools expect to build a community atmosphere that supports learning, both public information and specific school and community training programs will be needed. The key ingredient in building an effective school-community relationship is mutual respect. Developing respect sometimes takes work—on both sides. That work is the primary subject of Unit III.

INSTRUCTIONAL OUTLINES

Following are instructional outlines and group activities that could by used by trainers in a variety of settings or students in group discussions or study sessions.

III-1. IDENTIFY YOUR AUDIENCES

INTERNAL AUDIENCE	EXTERNAL AUDIENCE
Students	Non-parent adults
Parents	Senior citizens
School professionals	Businesses
Other school employees	Church/religious groups
Central office administration	Farm groups
School board members	Civic clubs
	Professional groups, etc.

SOURCE: Pennsylvania School Boards Association. *Schools/Community: Guidelines for Effective Communication.* New Cumberland, PA, 1986.

III-2. GAIN OR LOSS OF CONFIDENCE IN SCHOOLS AS EXPRESSED BY CITIZENS

The following are results of a Phi Delta Kappa study conducted to determine what factors most influenced citizens' gain or loss of confidence in the local school.

RANK AS SOURCE OF GAIN	SOURCE OF CONFIDENCE	RANK AS SOURCE OF LOSS
1	Teacher attitudes	1
2	Administrator attitudes	3
3	Student attitudes	6
4	Academic programs	9
5	Communications	7
6	Community attitudes	5
7	Academic performance	10
8	Instructional quality	11
9	Community involvement	16
10	Staff quality	8
11.5	Non-academic programs	15
11.5	Decision-making process	2
13	Discipline	4
14	Career/college readiness	14
15.5	Buildings/facilities	13
15.5	Funding	12
17	Materials/equipment	17.5
19	Equal opportunities	19
19	Salaries	20
19	Student/teacher ratio	17.5

SOURCE: Handbook for Developing Public Confidence in School. Bloomington. IN: Phi Delta Kappa Foundation, 1988.

III-3. Impression about Schools among Community Leaders*

The following are results of a study conducted by Phi Delta Kappa to determine what factors most influenced community leaders' impression of schools.

	Source of Impression		Most Influential Impression	
	School level	Districtwide	School level	Districtwide
School employees	80%	82%	51%	44%
School children	74	75	22	21
Parents of school children	73	81	13	8
PTA	30	28	2	5
Media	23	51	1	7
School board	23	51	1	5

*Respondents could check more than one response.

SOURCE: *Handbook for Developing Public Confidence in School.* Bloomington. IN: Phi Delta Kappa Foundation, 1988.

III-4. Who Was Responsible for Actions That Built Confidence?*

The following are results of a study conducted by Phi Delta Kappa to determine what individuals' actions most built confidence in schools.

Person Responsible	School Level	Districtwide
Teachers	65%	45%
Principal	63	39
Non-classroom certified person	42	34
Non-certified school person	30	9
School community (general)	22	24
School board	15	31
Students	15	7
Superintendent	15	48
Other central office staff	11	27

*Respondents could check more than one response.

SOURCE: *Handbook for Developing Public Confidence in School,* Bloomington. IN: Phi Delta Kappa Foundation, 1988.

III-5. Community Leaders' Sources of Confidence at the School-Building Level*

The following are results of a Phi Delta Kappa study to determine what sources were most responsible for community leaders' confidence in a school.

Rank	Sources of Confidence	No. of Responses
1.5	Dedicated, committed teachers	75
1.5	Special instructional & extracurricular programs	75
3	Effective administrators	61

4	Student-centered "caring" atmosphere	51
5	Positive attitudes of students/staff	40
6	Student discipline	38
7	Good curriculum	36
8	Student achievement	30
9	Parent participation	28
10.5	Communication with parents	22
10.5	Public image	22
12.5	High standards, goals, expectations	15
12.5	Board/superintendent relations, policies, decisions	15
14	Administrator/staff community service	13
15	Courteous office staff	12
16	Linkages with other institutions	11
17	Success of graduates	10
18	Student awards, honors	9
18	Testing, guidance, counseling programs	9
18	Community involvement with school	9

*Respondents could check more than one response.

SOURCE: *Handbook for Developing Public Confidence in School.* Bloomington. IN: Phi Delta Kappa Foundation, 1988.

III-6 Teacher and Staff Morale

Specific causes of stress, burnout, and low morale:

- Lack of recognition.
- Lack of involvement.
- Chronic discipline problems.
- Lack of planning time.
- Media assault and public scrutiny.
- Lack of interaction with other professionals.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993.

Suggested Group Activity

In small groups (4-5 people), discuss the preceding list to determine if it is valid, given individual's personal experience. Should other factors be added? From the discussion, select two factors to address and develop strategies or specific actions to reduce those causes of staff and teacher stress, burnout and low morale. If time permits, have the groups share their recommendations.

III-7. Techniques for Building Public Confidence in Schools

- Create a spirit of caring.
- Strive for high quality.
- Share good news about the schools.
- Show connections between home, school, and community.

- Work with each other, not against each other.
- Get the community on the school team.
- Help people more; hassle people less.
- Demonstrate a sense of direction.
- Be an educational leader in the community.
- Create substantive themes for involvement.
- Be an effective communicator.
- Have confidence in yourself.

SOURCE: American Association of School Administrators. *Building Confidence in Our Schools.* Arlington, VA, 1983.

III-8. Effects of Citizen Participation

- Higher pupil achievement.
- Increased support and public confidence.
- Improved school attendance.
- Fewer discipline problems.
- Improved attitude and self concepts.
- Passage of bond issues and referenda.
- Better informed electorate.

SOURCE: Henderson, A. *The Evidence Continues to Grow: Parent Involvement Improves School Achievement.* Washington, DC: National Committee for Citizens in Education, 1989.

III-9. Involving Parents: Key Facts

- The family provides the child's first educational experience.
- Involving parents in their children's formal education boosts student achievement.
- Parent involvement is most effective when it is thorough, long-lasting, and well-planned.
- The benefits of parent involvement are not limited to early childhood or elementary school; there are strong effects from involving parents all the way through high school.
- Involving parents in their children's education at home is not enough. To ensure that the school serves the community well, parents must be involved at all levels in the school.
- Children from low-income and minority families have the most to gain when schools involve parents. Parents do not have to be well-educated to help.
- We cannot look at the school and the home apart from one another; we must see how they work with each other and with the world at large.

SOURCE: Henderson, A. *The Evidence Continues to Grow: Parent Involvement Improves School Achievement.* Washington, DC: National Committee for Citizens in Education, 1989.

III-10. Parents and Schools: Some Survey Results

On the subject of regular home-school contact, one statewide survey found:

- 16% of parents reported they had never received a memo from their child's teacher.
- More than 35% had never had a parent-teacher conference.
- About 60% of parents had never spoken to their child's teacher on the phone.

- 96% had never been visited at home by their child's teacher.

On the subject of parent volunteers at school:

- 70% of parents surveyed had never helped the teacher in the classroom or on trips.
- 88% had never assisted in the library, cafeteria, or other school areas.
- 4% had spent more than 25 days per year at school.

SOURCE: Epstein, J., Johns Hopkins University, Center on Families, Communities, Schools, and Children's Learning, 1988.

III-11. OERI Survey on Parent Involvement

A survey conducted by the U.S. Office of Educational Research and Improvement documented the lack of parent involvement as well as the lack of communication between parents and their children; 25,000 eighth graders, their parents, teachers, and principals were surveyed.

FINDINGS ABOUT PARENTS

- Nearly two thirds (65%) of parents said they had never talked to school officials about the academic program being pursued by their eighth grade child.
- Only half (50%) of the parents had attended a school meeting since the beginning of the school year.
- Only 52% of the parents said they had ever asked about or discussed grades with a teacher or school administrator.
- Nearly half (48%) the parents said they had not contacted the school about their child's academic performance.
- Fewer than three in ten (29%) of parents had visited their children's classes.

FINDINGS ABOUT EIGHTH GRADERS

- 66% of eighth graders reported that they never discussed their classes or school programs with their parents.
- 66% reported that there were no restrictions on their television viewing and that they spent four times as many hours watching TV as they did doing their homework.
- 50% of the students reported that they had discussed school experiences with their parents less than twice during the school year.

SOURCE: Office of Educational Research and Improvement. *A Profile of the American Eighth Grader.* Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Education, 1990.

III-12. Factors Explaining Low Rate of Contact between Schools and Home

- Limited skills and knowledge on which to build collaboration, i.e., parents' lack of fluency in English, lack of information on children's progress, and lack of understanding of course content; school's lack of knowledge of children's homelife and lack of efforts to reach out.

- Restricted opportunities for interaction, i.e., other demands on time, obstructive organizational policies/practices, lack of communications skills.
- Psychological and cultural barriers, i.e., misperceptions, intimidation and distrust, differences in language, values, and methods of education.

SOURCE: Adapted from Chavkin, N. F., ed. *Families and Schools in a Pluralistic Society*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993.

III-13. Underlying Principles in Reducing Home-School Barriers

- Contact with parents before children begin school.
- Contact with parents early in the school year.
- On-going communication that includes good news as well as concerns.
- Two-way communication such as telephone calls and home visits.
- Focus on the knowledge and interests of individual families.

SOURCE: Adapted from Chavkin, N. F., ed. *Families and Schools in a Pluralistic Society*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993.

III-14. At Risk Families and Schools: Becoming Partners

As a rule, parents of at-risk students are not very involved with the schools. "It may not be easy to reach parents," says Lynn Liontos, "but there's no alternative when we consider that these children are our future." Liontos summarizes several keys to involving parents of at-risk students.

- COMMITTED, DEDICATED LEADERSHIP. Overcoming barriers to reaching at-risk parents does not require large amounts of money, but it does take energy, patience, and persistence.
- INNOVATIVE, FLEXIBLE APPROACHES." The way we've always done it" clearly doesn't work. What is needed is a willingness to try something new.
- ATTENTION TO ENVIRONMENT, FORMAT, AND SCHEDULING. When, where, and how a meeting or event is held is important to the goal of making parents feel welcome.
- STRONG, PERSONAL OUTREACH. Schools need to reach out to parents and the community, rather than expecting parents to take the lead.
- ESSENTIALS OF CHILDCARE, TRANSPORTATION, AND MEALS. For low-income parents, the absence of these *basics* may make their participation impossible.

SOURCE: Liontos, L. B. *At-Risk Families and School: Becoming Partners*. Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse of Educational Management, 1993.

Suggested Group Activity

Most schools have not been aggressive in their outrearch efforts to get parents and families involved in the education of their children. In small groups, develop a list of strategies, activities or special programs that could be used to involve parents and families in their children's education.

III-15. Strategies for Reducing Home-School Barriers

EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERACTION

- Accommodate the changing nature of American families by providing transportation, holding evening/weekend meetings, etc.
- Establish a parent-liaison or community-school coordinator position.
- Capitalize on parent interest in helping students at home by establishing special programs such as Teachers Involving Parents in Schoolwork, and Parents In Touch.
- Sponsor See-For-Yourself Tours and Patron Tours and invite all residents, including businesses, for a bus tour.
- Sponsor a Parent University and set up a one-day format for parents to receive information about various educational matters and topics such as Parents as First Teachers, Coping with Teens, etc.
- Establish a program where students regularly perform for their parents and the community.
- Have the school serve as a community center for a wide variety of meetings, activities, adult classes, and recreational opportunities that serve citizens of all ages.
- Work with PTA/PTO and other booster groups to establish opportunities to meet the principal and teachers in neighborhood homes.

INCREASE COLLABORATION, KNOWLEDGE, AND SKILLS

- Establish comprehensive programs through interagency collaboration and full-service-schools initiatives.
- Provide parent education and special training, such as Math Matters and Family Math.
- Provide special programs in family literacy and job training.

REDUCE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL BARRIERS

- Bring new information to parents and educators in non-threatening settings via seminars, informal learning sessions, and home visits.
- Implement targeted approaches and programs that combine English as a second language (ESL) with increased parental understanding of home-school collaboration.

SOURCE: Adapted from Chavkin, N.F., ed. *Families and Schools in a Pluralistic Society*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993.

III-16. Effects of Parent Involvement on Student Performance

When parents are involved, children do better in school, resulting in:

- Higher grades and test scores.
- Long-term improvement in academic achievement.
- Improved attitudes and behavior.
- More successful programs.
- More effective schools.

These outcomes are particularly true for children labeled "at risk."

SOURCE: National Committee for Citizens in Education. *Taking Stock*. Washington, DC, 1993.

III-17. Taking Stock: What's Involved

Taking stock *is*:

- A systematic way to look at the school's relationship with families from a number of perspectives.
- A tool for self-evaluation—to identify strengths and weaknesses.
- A practical approach to increasing parent involvement, leading to improved achievement for children.

Taking stock is *not*:

- An "evaluation" by outsiders to be used against the school.
- Just another survey.
- A standardized test that is difficult to take and understand.

The goals of taking stock are:

- Present the elements of an effective parent, community, school partnership to improve student achievement.
- Enable a school to assess its current efforts to reach out and work with its community.
- Provide a user-friendly process to identify areas of strength and weakness.
- Recommend how to use the findings to develop an action plan for improvement.

SOURCE: National Committee for Citizens in Education. *Taking Stock*. Washington, DC, 1993.

III-18. Taking Stock: A Report Card

(Grade each of the following on a scale of 1-4, with 4 being excellent; calculate the average for each category.)

	Grade	Final Grade
Reaching Out to Families		
1. Communicating often and openly with families	_____	
2. Reaching all cultures and language groups	_____	
3. Reaching working and single parents	_____	
4. Extra efforts to reach all families	_____	
		_____
Welcoming Families to the School Building		
5. School's welcome to families	_____	
6. Open and available school and staff	_____	
7. Encouraging volunteers	_____	
8. Active, strong PTA/PTO	_____	
9. Major PTA/PTO activities	_____	
10. Reaching out to the community	_____	
		_____
Developing Strong Relationships		
11. Teachers communicate with parents	_____	
12. Parent-teacher partnership	_____	
13. Parent-principal relationship	_____	

14. Parents involved in decision making _____
15. School's parent involvement policy _____

_____

Helping Parents Understand the Curriculum

16. Information about the curriculum _____
17. Goals for student achievement _____
18. Information on student performance _____

_____

Helping Parents Be More Effective

19. School supports parents _____
20. School connects to community services _____

_____

A	3.2-4.0	Great job. Keep up the good work!
B	2.6-3.1	Good work. A little more will put you on top!
C	2.0-2.5	Solid beginning. Time for some next steps!
U	1.0-1.9	Needs improvement. Let's get to work!

SOURCE: National Committee for Citizens in Education. *Taking Stock*. Washington, DC, 1993.

III-19. Sample of Report Card Provided to All Visitors

A Report Card on Our School

Introduction

This report card is designed to improve communication and understanding between parents and school staff. Please complete it and leave it with us, or take it home and return it to school with a student or by mail.

Key

Please respond to the items by using a letter from this key:

A = Excellent
B = Good
C = Fair
D = Poor
F = Fail
I = Incomplete information or can't decide

ITEMS

____ 1. How do you rate the appearance and upkeep of our school and classrooms?
____ 2. How do you rate your child's academic progress at our school?
____ 3. How do you rate our school's communication with the home (telephone contact, grade reports, notes, newsletters)?
____ 4. How do you rate discipline at our school?
____ 5. How do you rate your child's attitude toward this school?

Thank you for your interest in making [Name] School a better place to learn.

SOURCE: Provided by Craig, N., Executive Director, New Hampshire Partners in Education, August 1993.

III-20. ROLES FOR FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

- Home-school communicator
- Family as supporter
- Family as teacher
- Family as learner
- Family as advocates and decision makers

SOURCE: Provided by Craig, N., Executive Director, New Hampshire Partners in Education, August 1993.

III-21. SCHOOL-INITIATED PARENT-INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

- REGULAR CONTACT between school and home, at meetings and in written communication.
- VISITING PARENTS in their homes and work sites.
- INSERVICE TRAINING for teachers and administrators on home-school contacts.
- School-designed REINFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES to do at home.
- CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS and IN-SCHOOL TUTORING.
  - -Parent volunteers and in-school tutors are more likely to reinforce their own children's learning at home.
  - -Older volunteers in the classroom enhance pupil self-concept and thereby contribute to pupil achievement.
- PARENT EDUCATION, especially with parents as trainers.

SOURCE: Zerchykov, R. Boston, MA: Center for Responsive Education, 1984.

III-22. MAKING PARENTS FEEL WELCOME

One way to increase parent involvement is to make your school more family friendly. Ask these questions and find out how friendly your school is:

- Are our school facilities welcoming? Are they available to families and the community?
- Is our school entrance clean?
- Are directions to the office clear and simple?
- Is there a warm and friendly reception area in the office, including a place for parents to sit?

- Does our entire staff create a welcoming atmosphere?
- Do people who answer the phones receive training?
- Are all staff members welcoming?
- Do we provide parenting education?
- Do we offer classes or topic sessions on homework, discipline, or motivation?
- Do we have a parent group participating in the advisory function in our school?
- Do parents participate in developing the budget and annual goals?
- Do we schedule regular opportunities for parent/community visits?

SOURCE: The Parent Institute. *Sample Staff Newsletter.* Fairfax Station, VA, 1993.

III-23. Ways Middle Schools Can Get Parents Involved

Schools that serve "kids in the middle" need parent involvement. Here's how middle schools can reach out to parents:

- Write a clear welcoming policy on parent involvement. Publish it, so parents can see that you mean what you say.
- Establish a point of contact. Make sure each child in your school is known well by at least one adult. That person should serve as the point of contact with parents.
- Check your office etiquette, with the idea of improving it. The school office can be a friendly place or a turn-off for parents.
- Encourage parents to network. Sponsor parent-to-parent communication and events.
- Make someone responsible. Appoint a full-time parent contact person to promote school-home partnerships.
- Provide a parent room.
- Find out what parents need. Use surveys and telephone calls and ask questions.

SOURCE: The Parent Institute. "What's Working in Parent Involvement," *Sample Newsletter Issue.* Fairfax Station, VA, 1993.

III-24. Circumstances that Complicate Teachers' Effort to Work Collaboratively with Parents

In the best of all worlds, teachers and parents are mutually reinforcing partners in the education of young people. But three circumstances complicate this partnership.

- The interests of parents and schools sometimes diverge, requiring teachers to make difficult judgments about how best to fulfill their joint obligations to students and to parents.
- Students vary in the degree and kind of support they receive at home for their school work. The effects of culture, language, and parental education, income, and aspirations influence each learner. Teachers are alert to these effects and tailor their practice accordingly to enhance student achievement. However, when faced with conflict, the teacher must hold the interest of the student and the purposes of schooling paramount.

- The behavior and mind-set of schools and families can be adversarial. Some parents are distrustful of the school's values, and schools sometimes underestimate a family's potential to contribute to children's intellectual growth. Students get caught in the middle, their allegiance to and affection for each party challenged by the other.

Accomplished teachers develop skills and understanding to avoid these traditional pitfalls and work to foster collaborative relationships between school and family.

SOURCE: National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. *Toward High and Rigorous Standards for the Teaching Profession.* Washington, DC, 1990.

III-25. Epstein's Types of Parent Involvement and the Role of Schools

TYPE 1. BASIC OBLIGATION OF FAMILIES. Schools help all families establish home environments to support learning.

Examples:

- Schools provide suggestions for home conditions that support learning at each grade level.
- Schools provide workshops, videotapes, computerized phone messages on parenting and child-rearing issues at each grade level.
- Schools provide families with information about adolescent health and safety, supervision, nutrition, discipline, and parenting approaches.

TYPE 2. BASIC OBLIGATION OF SCHOOLS. Schools design effective forms of communication to each parent.

Examples:

- Schools provide communications to help families help students select curricula and choose among special options.
- Teachers conduct conferences with every parent at least once a year, with follow-up as needed.
- Schools provide information to help with the transition from elementary to middle level and from middle level to high school, and to help students plan for college and jobs.
- Translators are provided for language-minority families.
- Weekly or monthly folders of student work are sent home for review and parent comments and then returned.

TYPE 3. INVOLVEMENT AT SCHOOL. Schools recruit and organize parent help and support.

Examples:

- School volunteer program, class parent, or committee of volunteers is established for each room.
- Schools provide parent room or parent club for volunteers and resources for parents.
- Annual postcard survey is mailed to identify all available talents, times, and locations of volunteers.

TYPE 4. INVOLVEMENT IN HOME LEARNING. Schools give parents ideas on how to help their children at home.

Examples:

- Information is provided to parents on requirements in each subject at each grade level.
- Regular homework schedules are established (once a week or twice a month) that require students to discuss schoolwork at home.
- Calendars are provided with daily topics for discussion by parents and students.
- Homework hotlines are provided and videotapes are made of classes for absentees.

TYPE 5. INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION MAKING, GOVERNANCE AND ADVOCACY. Schools recruit and train parent leaders.

Examples:

- Participation and leadership opportunities in PTA/PTO or other parent organizations are provided, including membership on advisory councils or committees on such topics as curriculum, safety, and personnel.
- Independent advocacy groups are established.

TYPE 6. COLLABORATION WITH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS. Schools, families, and students must establish connections with agencies, businesses, cultural groups, and community organizations.

Examples:

- Schools coordinate student access to community and support services.
- Schools draw on community resources to provide parent education in adolescent development.

III-26. EXAMPLES OF POSITIVE OUTCOMES LINKED TO EACH TYPE OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

PARENT OUTCOMES

TYPE 1. PARENTING

- Self-confidence in parenting.
- Knowledge of child development.
- Understanding of home as environment for student learning.

TYPE 2. COMMUNICATING

- Understanding of school programs.
- Interaction with school faculty and staff.
- Monitoring child's progress.

TYPE 3. VOLUNTEERING

- Understanding teacher's job and school programs.
- Familiarity with teachers and other school personnel.
- Comfortable in interactions at school.

TYPE 4. LEARNING AT HOME

- Interaction with child as student.
- Support and encouragement of schoolwork.
- Participation in child's education.

TYPE 5. REPRESENTING OTHER PARENTS

- Input to policies that affect child's education.

- Feeling in control of environment.

TYPE 6. COLLABORATING

- Solving problems usually associated with community-school connections.
- Increasing the knowledge about community resources.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

TYPE 1. PARENTING

- Security.
- Respect for parent.
- Improved attendance.
- Awareness of importance of school.

TYPE 2. COMMUNICATING

- Student participation in parent-teacher conferences, or in preparation for conferences.
- Better decisions about courses, programs.

TYPE 3. VOLUNTEERING

- Improved learning skills from receiving individual attention.
- Greater ease of communication with adults.

TYPE 4. LEARNING AT HOME

- Homework completion.
- Improved self-concept of ability as learner.
- Greater achievement in skills practiced.

TYPE 5. REPRESENTING OTHER PARENTS

- Rights protected.
- Specific benefits linked to specific policies.

TYPE 6. COLLABORATING

- Making connections with other community resources.
- Helping avoid fragmented and duplicated services.

TEACHER OUTCOMES

TYPE 1. PARENTING

- Understanding of distinct family cultures, goals, talents, and needs.

TYPE 2. COMMUNICATING

- Knowledge that family has common base of information for discussion of student problems and progress.
- Use of parent network for communications.

TYPE 3. VOLUNTEERING

- Awareness of parent interest and willingness to help.
- Readiness to try programs that involve parents in a variety of ways.
- Feelings of parent support for programs.

TYPE 4. LEARNING AT HOME

- Respect and appreciation for parents' time and their ability to follow through and reinforce learning.
- Better design of homework assignments.

TYPE 5. REPRESENTING OTHER PARENTS

- Equal status interaction with parents to improve school programs.

- Awareness of parent perspectives for policy development.

TYPE 6. COLLABORATING

- Sharing responsibility for young people's education and future success.
- Better distribution of services.

SOURCE: Epstein, J. "School and Family Partnerships," *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*. New York, NY: McMillan, 1992.

III-27. FOUR MODELS OF HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS

PROTECTIVE MODEL. The goal of this model is to reduce conflict between parents and educators, primarily through the separation of parents' and educators' functions, and to protect the school from interference by parents.

Assumptions are:

- Parents delegate to the school responsibility for educating their children.
- Parents hold school personnel accountable for results.
- Educators accept this delegation of responsibility.

Advantage is:

- Generally effective at achieving its goals of protecting the school against parental intrusion.

Disadvantages are:

- Exacerbates many conflicts between home and school by providing no structures or predictable opportunities for preventive problem solving.
- Ignores the potential of home-school collaboration for improving school achievement.
- Rejects rich resources for enrichment and school support from families and other members of the community that could be available to the school.

SCHOOL-TO-HOME TRANSMISSION MODEL. The goal of this model is to enlist parents in supporting the objectives of the school.

Assumptions are:

- Children's achievement is fostered by continuity of expectations and values between home and school.
- School personnel should identify the values and practices outside the school that contribute to school success.
- Parents should endorse the importance of schooling, reinforce school expectations at home, provide conditions at home that nurture development and support school success, and ensure that the child meets minimum academic and social requirements.

Advantages are:

- Programs based on this model have been useful in increasing children's school success.
- Parents seek clear direction from the school about the social and academic skills needed for children's success and about parents' role in supporting the development of those skills.

- Clear transmission of information can be a welcome offering to parents, particularly when they have not had access to the social mainstream and seek such access for their children.

Disadvantages are:

- Programs built on this model often contain components that reflect an unwillingness to consider parents as equal partners with important strengths.
- All parents may not be able to devote sufficient time and energy to parent involvement activities if such conditions as dangerous housing, poor health, or stringent employment requirements interfere.
- Schools may find it difficult to draw clear boundaries between the roles of school and home in formal education.
- There is a danger of demeaning the value and importance of the family's culture in an effort to transmit the values and goals of the school.
- Differences in class or educational background can make teachers and parents feel uncomfortable and threatened, and turf concerns need to be addressed and negotiated.

CURRICULUM ENRICHMENT MODEL. The goal of this model is to expand and extend the school's curriculum by incorporating the contributions of families.

Assumptions are:

- Continuity of learning between home and school critically important in encouraging children's learning.
- The values and cultural histories of many children are omitted from the standard school curriculum, leading to a disruption of continuity between home and school, and often to reduced motivation, status, and achievement of these children in school.
- These omissions distort the curriculum, leading to a less accurate and less comprehensive understanding of events and achievements and to a perpetuation of damaging beliefs and attitudes about immigrant and oppressed minorities.
- Parents and educators should work together to enrich curriculum objectives and content.
- Relationships between home and school are based on mutual respect, and both parents and teachers are seen as experts and resources in the process of discovery.

Advantages are:

- Model offers an attractive approach for incorporating parent involvement into children's learning.
- Drawing on the knowledge and expertise of parents increases the resources available to the school and provides rich opportunities for adults to learn from each other.
- The contributions of immigrant or oppressed minorities who have not traditionally participated in schools are especially welcomed.

Disadvantages are:

- Creating continuity between home and school demands a significant investment of parents' and educators' time, resources, support, and study.
- The number of different cultures represented in particular classrooms may make curricular adaption very complex.
- Debate still rages in this country about what the school's mission should be in educating children with diverse backgrounds: Is there a majority culture and should it be taught to all, or should the diversity of our children be reflected and valued in the curriculum?
- Differences in class or educational background can make teachers and parents feel uncomfortable and threatened, and turf concerns need to be addressed and negotiated.

PARTNERSHIP MODEL. The primary goal of this model is for parents and educators to work together to accomplish a common mission: generally, for all children in school to achieve success.

Assumptions are:

- Accomplishing the joint mission requires a re-visioning of the school environment and the discovery of new policies and practices, structures, roles, relationships, and attitudes in order to realize the vision.
- Accomplishing the joint mission demands collaboration among parents, community representatives, and educators. Because the task is challenging and requires many resources, none of these groups acting alone can accomplish it.

Advantage is:

- A true partnership is a transforming vision of school culture based on collegiality, experimentation for school improvement, mutual support, and joint problem solving.

Disadvantages are:

- It is difficult to implement.
- It requires exchanging the traditional isolation of the educator's role for a collaborative role, and developing new patterns of scheduling and interaction to support this role.
- It requires a leader who is also a facilitator and cheerleader, as well as school and district policies that support the effort.

SOURCE: Swap, S. M. *Developing Home-School Partnerships: From Concepts to Practice.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1993.

III-28. FOUR ELEMENTS OF A TRUE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

Building on Epstein's topology, Swap outlines elements of a partnership between home and school. It differs from Epstein's model in stressing the mutuality of interaction between home and school.

- CREATING TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION. Parents and educators both have vital information to share. Educators share information with parents about children's

progress in school; their expectations and hopes for the school and the children; and their curriculum, policies, and programs. Parents share information with educators about their children's needs, strengths, and background; and their expectations and hope for the school and their children.

- ENHANCING LEARNING AT HOME AND AT SCHOOL. Parents contribute to children's learning by having high expectations, providing a setting that allows concentrated work, supporting and nurturing learning that occurs in school and elsewhere, and offering love. Educators develop curriculum and instructional practices and strong relationships with children that create conditions for optimal learning. Parents and educators develop an array of ways in which parents can be involved in and out of the classroom to enrich children's learning.
- PROVIDING MUTUAL SUPPORT. Educators support parents by offering educational programs for them that are responsive to their interests and needs. Parents support educators in many ways, such as volunteering in school, organizing and planning activities, raising money, and attending functions. Educators and parents build trusting relationships and arrange occasions to acknowledge and celebrate each other's contributions to children's growth. Increasingly, the school becomes the critical institution in the community for linking parents with useful health, education, and social services.
- MAKING JOINT DECISIONS. Parents and educators work together to improve the school through participation on councils, committees, and planning and management teams. Parents and educators are involved in joint problem solving at every level—individual child, classroom, school, district.

SOURCE: Swap, S. M. *Developing Home-School Partnerships: From Concepts to Practice.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1993.

III-29. HOME-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

Responsibilities of educators and families:

- Families and schools must communicate with each other.
- Families and schools ought to support each other.
- Families and schools must be co-learners and co-teachers.
- Families and schools should jointly advocate, advise, and make decisions about schools and children.

SOURCE: Crispeels, J. *Using an Effective School Framework to Build Home-School Partnerships for Student Success.* Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, 1993.

III-30. THE OTHER 91 PERCENT

School consumes a surprisingly small portion of American children's lives. The young person who diligently attends class six hours a day, 180 days a year, from kindergarten through twelfth grade, will, upon reaching his/her eighteenth birthday, have spent just 9 percent of her/his hours on earth under the schoolhouse roof.

What is the leverage of the 9 percent, especially:

- where the other 91 percent works at cross-purposes?

- when out-of-school conditions are hostile?
- when other agencies don't carry their share of the responsibility?
- when a child's tangled problems exceed his/her capability, especially where the home situation is itself destructive?

In these situations, the limits of the 9 percent are quickly reached.

SOURCE: Finn, C. E. Jr. *We Must Take Charge: Our Schools and Our Future* cited in Chimerine, C. B.; Panton, K. L; and Russo, A. W. W. *The Other 91 Percent: Strategies to Improve the Quality of Out-of-School Experiences of Chapter 1 Students.* Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates, Inc., 1993.

III-31. Parent and Family Involvement in Chapter 1

Recent reports suggest a number of specific parent involvement activities that Chapter 1 might encourage. An expanded menu of effective strategies can expand parent involvement efforts beyond parent advisory councils, annual meetings, and informal parent-teacher communication. Options for increasing the effectiveness of Chapter 1 parent involvement include:

BROADEN GOALS AND METHODS TO INCLUDE HOME LEARNING AND PARENT EDUCATION ACTIVITIES.

- Extend students' learning time by teaching parents to conduct home learning activities, providing learning materials for the home, and creating a book and toy lending library.
- Enhance parental knowledge of child development, school practices, and effective parenting techniques through parent meetings and peer group discussions.
- Increase parents' ability to assist their children with homework by coordinating services with adult literacy, English as a second language courses, or GED preparation programs.
- Emphasize parent-child relations by creating structured intergenerational learning opportunities, e.g., parent-child take-home projects.

PROVIDE SUPPORT SERVICES.

- Provide child care and meals for parents who wish to attend parent involvement meetings or classes.
- Reimburse parents for transportation costs.
- Provide referral services to parents in need of other community services, e.g., health, public assistance, employment and training.

SHARE INFORMATION AND COORDINATE SERVICES WITH EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS THAT TARGET LOW-INCOME CHILDREN.

- Institute meetings between the staff of early childhood programs and Chapter 1 staff during which preschool staff convey information about families, share practical information, and help foster continuity in parent involvement activities when children make the transition from preschool to elementary school.
- Encourage Chapter 1 staff to visit feeder preschool and early childhood programs in order to introduce themselves and the Chapter 1 program to parents whose children might participate the following year.

- Invite preschool or family literacy participants and staff to visit Chapter 1 classroom, so that both parents and staff become familiar with Chapter 1 staff and services.

SHARE INFORMATION AND COORDINATE SERVICES WITH OTHER SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS.

- Schedule parent involvement activities to coincide with school or district events, e. g., parent-teacher conferences.
- Combine funds to hire parent liaison staff who can serve both Chapter 1 and non-Chapter 1 families.
- Encourage Chapter 1 parents to attend schoolwide activities and events.

PROVIDE FLEXIBLE SERVICES AND VARIED ACTIVITIES.

- Schedule parent meetings at different times in order to allow parents with different schedules to participate, e.g., before school, during lunch, after school, in the evenings.
- Conduct activities at locations that might be convenient and accessible to parents, e.g., housing projects, shopping malls, community centers, and churches.
- Offer a variety of activities, including parent meetings, literacy classes, parent advisory councils, conferences, volunteer programs, and home visits.

ACCOMMODATE DIFFERENCES IN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE.

- Translate publicity flyers and learning materials into the home language(s) of the parent community.
- Persuade community members to serve as volunteers and aides in parent involvement activities.
- Train staff to recognize and accommodate cultural differences, e.g., in parenting and gender roles, educational expectations, behavioral norms.

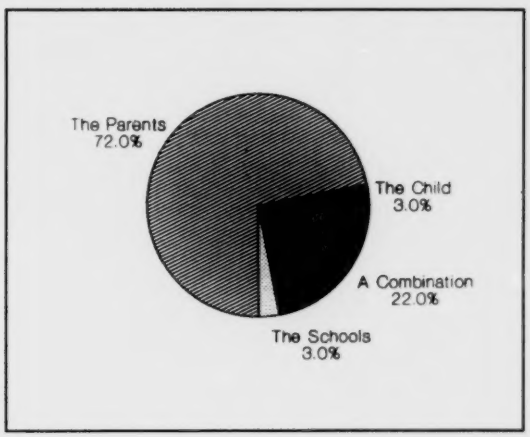
FOSTER LOCAL SUPPORT.

- Establish an advisory committee on parent involvement.
- Develop a written parent involvement policy.
- Train administrators in designing and implementing parent involvement and parent volunteer activities.
- Fund parent involvement initiatives and related curriculum development efforts.

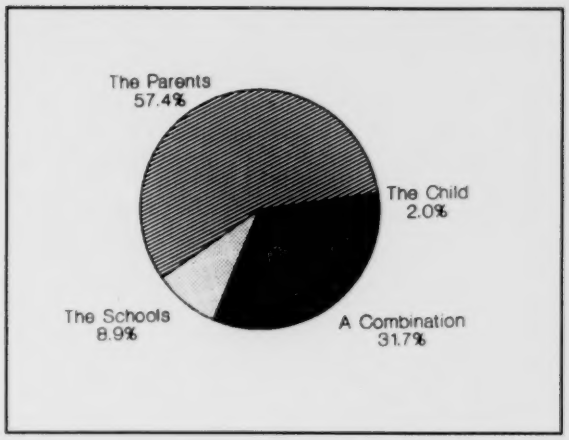
SOURCE: Chimerine, C. B.; Panton, K. L; and Russo, A. W. W. *The Other 91 Percent: Strategies to Improve the Quality of Out-of-School Experiences of Chapter 1 Students*. Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates, Inc., 1993.

III-32. READING DEVELOPMENT

Research results are clear about the importance of the parent/family role in preparing children to learn. Reading ability is also a key determinant of readiness to learn. The following graphs show a comparison of the parent's, school's, and child's role in developing a child's interest in reading and the child's ability to read well.



DEVELOPING CHILD'S INTEREST IN READING



CHILDREN READING WELL

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout, Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993; from *Education Week*, June 1990.

III-33. PARENTS AND TEACHERS: DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

PARENTS SAY:

- Teachers send home only bad news.
- Teachers don't make parents feel welcome.
- Teachers don't do what they say they will.
- Parent-teacher conferences are routine and unproductive.
- Teachers teach too much by rote.
- Teachers care more about discipline than teaching.

TEACHERS SAY:

- Parents don't seem interested in school.
- Parents promise but don't follow through.
- Parents don't show up.
- Parents only pretend to understand.
- Parents do children's work for them.
- Parents worry too much about how other kids are doing.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993.

III-34. TEN TRUTHS OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

- ALL PARENTS HAVE HOPES AND GOALS FOR THEIR CHILDREN. They differ in how they support their children's efforts to achieve those goals.
- THE HOME IS ONE OF SEVERAL SPHERES THAT SIMULTANEOUSLY INFLUENCE A CHILD. The school must work with other spheres for the child's benefit, not push them apart.
- THE PARENT IS THE CHIEF CONTRIBUTOR TO A CHILD'S EDUCATION. Schools can either co-opt the parent's role or recognize the parent's potential.
- PARENT INVOLVEMENT MUST BE A LEGITIMATE ELEMENT OF EDUCATION. It deserves equal emphasis with such elements as program improvement and evaluation.

- PARENT INVOLVEMENT IS A PROCESS, NOT A PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES. It requires ongoing energy and effort.
- PARENT INVOLVEMENT REQUIRES A VISION, POLICY, AND A FRAMEWORK. A consensus of understanding is important.
- PARENTS' INTERACTION WITH THEIR OWN CHILDREN IS THE CORNERSTONE OF INVOLVEMENT. A program must recognize the value, diversity, and difficulty of this role.
- MOST BARRIERS TO PARENT INVOLVEMENT ARE FOUND WITHIN SCHOOL PRACTICES. They are not found within parents.
- ANY PARENT CAN BE "HARD TO REACH." Parents must be approached individually; they are not defined by gender, ethnicity, family situation, education, or income.
- SUCCESSFUL PARENT INVOLVEMENT NURTURES RELATIONSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS. It strengthens bonds between home and school, parent and educator, parent and child, and school and community.

SOURCE: Handout, National Community Education Association Conference, 1991.

III-35. SEVEN PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPING A FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

There is no blueprint for "The Partnership School"—the school that collaborates effectively with families. Because schools are so different, there is no single model, no one set of practices or characteristics, to which we can point and say, "Aha! That is the definitive Partnership School." But all schools that work well with families share a fundamental set of principles. If the principal, school staff, and parents do not subscribe to most of these principles, their attempts to increase family involvement will fall short.

Seven principles have been identified as essential to a family-school partnership. For each one, we give a range of the best practices drawn from actual schools. Some of these examples are familiar, even ordinary, but others may seem more unconventional. Some apply only to elementary schools, others to all grade levels, others only to secondary schools. The examples illustrate how a principle has been applied in a particular setting and to provide ideas about how to implement the other principles in your school.

1. EVERY ASPECT OF THE SCHOOL CLIMATE IS OPEN, HELPFUL, AND FRIENDLY.

   Examples:

   - A "Families and Visitors Are Welcome" sign is posted on the front door.
   - There is a parent lounge in the building, with comfortable chairs, a desk and telephone, and some books and magazines about child development, parenting, and education.
   - Tours and orientations are provided for new families, including those coming in at mid-semester.
   - A monthly family-teacher lunch is held in the school cafeteria.
   - The principal has early morning office hours set aside each week to meet with families. No appointment is necessary.

2. COMMUNICATIONS WITH FAMILIES (WHETHER ABOUT SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROGRAMS OR ABOUT THEIR OWN CHILDREN) ARE FREQUENT, CLEAR, AND TWO-WAY.
   Examples:
   - An attractive wall calendar is published each school year and mailed to every family with information about the school calendar and holidays, in-service days, schedules, and special events. It also includes key school policies, philosophy, and a list of personnel and important telephone numbers.
   - An Open House before the beginning of the school year and occasional Back-to-School Nights are held for parents to learn about school programs, meet school staff, and have an opportunity to ask questions.
   - First grade teachers call every home in the first weeks of the year to introduce themselves, and to encourage parents to visit school and call the teachers with any questions and concerns.
   - Fifth grade teachers send home a "Friday Folder," enclosing all the child's marked-up work for the week and a comment/question sheet that must be signed by the parent and returned on Monday.
   - A junior high principal sends a weekly sheet home to parents to update them on special events, new happenings, and sports results.
   - High school teachers send their course curriculum home to parents, via the student, outlining expectations about homework, how parents can help, and how and when they can be contacted.
   - High school homeroom teachers (or guidance counselors) call every student's parents in the first months of the year to review progress and to ask if they have any questions. An option for a conference is offered.
   - Parent Resource Centers are established to provide information on all aspects of the curriculum and on special programs such as Parents as First Teachers.
3. FAMILIES ARE TREATED AS COLLABORATORS IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS WITH A STRONG COMPLEMENTARY ROLE TO PLAY IN THEIR CHILDREN'S SCHOOL LEARNING AND BEHAVIOR.
   Examples:
   - An elementary school has developed a "Learning Contract" for each student, which spells out an agreement about individualized goals and tasks. It is signed annually by parents, teachers, and child.
   - A school district requires parent-teacher conferences at least once a year for students at all grade levels.
   - A high school sends warning notes home as soon as a student is in danger of failing a marking period. If the student does fail, a parent conference is required.
   - Teachers at an elementary school routinely call home when a young child seems withdrawn or troubled at school to confer with the parents and get their advice on how to approach him/her.
   - A junior high principal may ask the parents of a disruptive student to take turns coming to school for a couple of days to observe the student.

- A high school uses a volunteer phone roster to notify parents that their child is absent without an excuse. After two such absences, parents are required to accompany their child to school the next day and talk with the assistant principal.

4. FAMILIES ARE ENCOURAGED, BOTH FORMALLY AND INFORMALLY, TO COMMENT ON SCHOOL POLICIES AND (ON SOME ISSUES) TO SHARE IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS.
   Examples:
   - A junior high policy handbook (covering absences, grades, discipline, homework, etc.) is published, and a copy given to every new family and student. Opportunities for questions and comments are included on a tear-off sheet and encouraged at school meetings.
   - A school-site council, consisting of representatives of the teachers, parents, and administration, meets several times a year to decide how to spend the school's discretionary funds.
   - A senior high school, struggling to develop a new policy on smoking, drinking, and drugs, establishes a broadly representative parent and community advisory group to develop a draft code. After wide circulation and discussion among the entire student and parent body, the draft is revised and adopted.
5. THE SCHOOL RECOGNIZES ITS RESPONSIBILITY TO FORGE A PARTNERSHIP WITH ALL FAMILIES IN THE SCHOOL, NOT SIMPLY THOSE MOST EASILY AVAILABLE. THIS INCLUDES PARENTS WHO WORK OUTSIDE THE HOME, DIVORCED PARENTS WITHOUT CUSTODY, AND FAMILIES OF MINORITY RACE AND LANGUAGE.
   Examples:
   - A school principal ensures that employed parents receive advance warning of special daytime events and are offered times to meet with school teachers outside regular school hours, and works with the parent organization to make sure parents have arrangements for coping with sudden dismissal or school closing(such as snow days).
   - Schools in a community with a sudden increase in immigrant population hire Spanish and Vietnamese-speaking community outreach staff to make home visits, speak at churches about the school and the need to become involved, and listen to the parents' concerns.
   - A school district with a large number of children living in divorced or "blended" households routinely asks noncustodial parents if they wish to be included on the school mailing list, to receive copies of report cards, and to be invited to parent-teacher conferences.
   - The high school principal and assistant principals take turns personally inviting those parents whose children are not doing well to informal evening meetings to talk about the school's programs and the parents' concerns and questions.
6. THE PRINCIPAL AND OTHER SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS ACTIVELY EXPRESS AND PROMOTE THE PHILOSOPHY OF PARTNERSHIP WITH ALL FAMILIES.
   Examples:
   - An elementary school principal fills in for teachers who are meeting with parents, hires substitute teachers for conference days, and expects teachers to meet with parents before school, after school, or in the evening if necessary.

- A junior high school holds an annual banquet to honor its parent advisory group, and the principal presents awards for special accomplishments.
- A principal facilitates the parent organization, contacting students to provide babysitting for younger children at all elementary school events. The funds are taken from a school's special activity fund to which parents may contribute.
- A school district devotes one in-service day per year to train teachers to work with parents.
- The chairperson of an elementary school's parent advisory committee is given an office or desk near the principal's office. In a high school, the principal designates an assistant principal to have brief weekly meetings with the officers of the parent organization.

7. THE SCHOOL ENCOURAGES VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION BY FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE.

   Examples:

   - Each parent is expected to volunteer some time, skills, advice, or resources (money, equipment, supplies), whether during the day or on evenings and weekends. A wide-ranging list of such volunteer opportunities (taking into account families' different resources, situations, and needs) is sent to each family in the fall asking them to choose how to participate.
   - Community volunteers (retired persons, students, business employees) engage in one-to-one tutoring activities with children who have mild learning disabilities.
   - Local employers offer short internship placements for high school students so that they may explore various careers.
   - A junior high school, with the help of a small grant, hires a coordinator of volunteers to manage a supervised recreation program after school and on weekends.
   - A parent talent bank is created to provide supplementary art, music, math, and computer instruction during and after school.
   - Elementary school parents operate "telephone trees" to reach parents in each grade/class to find out who can provide rides for field trips, help immigrant families adjust to the community and school, or find materials for a study project.
   - An elementary school parent group organizes an information and referral service for parents who need after-school child care; a middle school parent group provides information about after-school and weekend recreation activities.
   - A brochure encouraging business and work sites to promote family involvement with the school is mailed to area businesses.

SOURCE: Excerpted from Henderson, A.; Marburger, C.; and Ooms, T. *Beyond the Bake Sale.* Washington, DC: National Committee for Citizens in Education, 1986.

SUGGESTED GROUP ACTIVITY

- In small groups (4-5 people), discuss the role of the internal publics on the development and maintenance of a positive public relations program. Select two job roles—one from the certified staff and one from the non-certified staff—and develop a training plan

designed to (1) improve the staff members' knowledge of the factors that influence confidence in schools, and (2) enhance their skills in public relations.

- Imagine that your school has never had a community education program and has a long history of non-involvement of parents. Because your school serves a low socio-economic population, past administrators have felt that it would be impossible to get parents involved. Assume that the school has a new principal who feels very strongly about the importance of parent involvement, and you are a member of a task force charged with devising a plan for increasing parent involvement, especially the families of at-risk students. What is the first step you think the task force should recommend to the principal? Why?

- Brainstorm involvement ideas and rank order them in terms of having promise. Compare your groups' ideas with those of other groups and try to generate a top-ten list for the total group.

RECOMMENDED READING

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UNIT IV

ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

Today, more than ever, schools are looking for ways to involve the community in the planning and decision-making process involved in school programming. Two important and doable vehicles for getting this involvement are advisory committees and volunteer programs.

Some advisory groups are elected, but many more are put together through appointment and volunteering. The manner of selecting members is less important than the degree to which the membership accurately reflects the community, the support the group gets from school staff, and the substance of its assignment. Whether the advisory group reports to the superintendent, the school board, the principal, or the community, its task must be clear to everyone involved.

School volunteer programs, another effective community involvement technique, must be based on a realistic assessment of the schedules and availability of potential volunteers. Because the number of mothers available to volunteer during the school day has declined dramatically over the past two decades, schools that are serious about increasing volunteer involvement are looking to other sources of volunteer support—senior citizens, business people, high school students, for example—and are willing to offer flexible schedules and short-term assignments to working parents.

Occasionally, in discussions about volunteers, partnerships, and other ways of involving parents, families, business people, and community members, there is confusion about the terms used. *Volunteer* programs usually deal with recruiting and training *individuals* to work in support of schools and education. *Partnership* programs bring support to education by involving *groups* or *organizations*. A *task force* is usually an ad hoc group formed to focus on a specific issue or assignment. An *advisory committee* is usually an on-going body that focuses on broad aspects of a school program.

Establishing advisory committees and school volunteer programs requires a strong commitment and a lot of work. There are a number of good—even self-interested—reasons for undertaking the hard, serious work involved in developing and nurturing effective advisory committees and volunteer programs. First, and most obviously, community members who become significantly involved with schools develop an understanding of competing interests, are more willing to accept compromise, and tend to support decisions that are made after broad-based consultation. There are other advantages as well:

- Special interests tend to balance out.
- Policy decisions are more likely to be based on complete and accurate information about the community.
- A sense of community cohesion will begin to develop.

INSTRUCTIONAL OUTLINES

Following are instructional outlines and group activities that could be used by trainers in a variety of settings or by students in group discussions or study sessions.

IV-1. Developing Effective Committees

- Representation. Ensure that committee make-up is representative of the total community—ethnic groups, socio-economic status, and gender—to increase the committee's impact and credibility.
- Environment. Provide a comfortable setting. Arrange chairs in a circle or around a table and provide refreshments when appropriate. Encourage members to have a sense of humor—it often adds perspective.
- Identification. Begin with introductions. Use readable nametags with the person's name and other appropriate information—organization, location, school, etc.
- Information. Provide each member with a packet of information that includes: membership list with addresses and phone numbers; brief statement of the purpose of the committee its history, and bylaws, if they exist; and other pertinent data, such as maps or statistics.
- Interaction. Encourage members to get to know each other through car pooling, calling one another when a member has been absent, etc.
- Parameters. Set parameters clearly and honestly so that there are no false expectations about authority. If the committee is advisory, make clear who will get the advice, and how recommendations will be communicated.
- Support. Provide appropriate staff and clerical support, including sending out an agenda and minutes in advance of meetings.
- Leadership. Encourage internal leadership and control of committee meetings.
- Schedules. Set starting and ending times and adhere to them; few meetings need to last more than two hours.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout, Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993.

IV-2. Guidelines for Advisory Committees

- State clearly and precisely the goals of the advisory committee.
- Involve a representative cross section of the community and the school.
- Keep committee size manageable.
- Decide on a leadership structure and chain of command.
- Establish a time schedule with specific intermediary goals.
- Determine precisely how the committee will work with the news media.
- Limit the number of advisory committees in operation at one time.
- Staff the advisory committee properly in terms of administration and other support personnel.
- Keep the committee on course.
- Maintain a clear understanding of what will happen to the committee's report.
- Discharge and thank the committee in a meaningful and appropriate manner.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout, Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993.

IV-3. So You're on the Council

Volunteers who serve on advisory committees usually remain active if they see that their time is not being wasted and that the committee is doing something worthwhile. *So You're on the Council* is a facilitator's guide and member handbook that can be used to establish a new council or to help an existing advisory committee become better organized. Its sections cover the following topics:

- Who's on this council? (Introduction)
- What's in it for me? (Motivation and interest)
- What kind of council is this? (Structure)
- The basics. (Purpose, policies and organizational placement)
- What are we doing here? (Job description)
- In the beginning. (History)
- How does this council work? (Procedures)
- Who's running this show? (Leadership)

SOURCE: Faust, G. *So You're on the Council.* Fairfax, VA: National Community Education Association, 1987.

IV-4. Discussion Rules for Advisory Committees

- All ideas are acceptable.
- Participants should try to present ideas quickly and concisely.
- No one participant should dominate the discussion.
- All participants should participate on a somewhat *equal time* basis.
- All comments should be relevant to the topic or idea under discussion.
- The group should not spend too much time on any single idea or topic.

SOURCE: Winecoff, L. University of South Carolina, September 1993.

IV-5. Basic Needs of People in Groups

In order to give their loyalty, interest, and best effort, group members need:

- A SENSE OF BELONGING.
  Assurance that no one objects to their presence.
  A feeling that they are sincerely welcome.
  Belief that they are honestly needed for themselves, not just for their hands, their money, etc.
- A SHARE IN PLANNING THE GROUP GOALS.
  This need will be satisfied only when individuals feel that their ideas have had a fair hearing.
- A BELIEF THAT THE GOALS ARE WITHIN REACH and that they make sense.
- CONVICTION THAT WHAT THE GROUP IS DOING IS WORTHWHILE—that it contributes to human welfare, that its value extends beyond the group.
- A SHARE IN MAKING THE RULES of the group—the rules by which together the group will live and work toward its goals.
- CLEAR DETAIL ABOUT WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THEM so that they can work confidently.

- RESPONSIBILITIES THAT CHALLENGE, that are within range of their abilities, and that contribute toward reaching the goals.
- A SENSE THAT PROGRESS IS BEING made toward the goals that have been set.
- INFORMATION, so decisions can be made on the basis of facts.
- CONFIDENCE AND TRUST IN THE GROUP'S LEADER.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993.

IV-6. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Parliamentary procedures help a group operate effectively. Parliamentary law is simple in principle and based largely on common sense and courtesy. However, it may seem technical because of the special vocabulary that is used.

The purpose of parliamentary law is to:

- Enable an assembly to transact business with speed and efficiency.
- Protect the rights of each individual.
- Preserve a spirit of harmony within the group.
- Determine the wishes of a group on any matter.

To achieve these purposes, five basic principles are observed.

- Only one subject may claim the attention of the assembly at one time.
- Each proposition presented for consideration is entitled to full and free debate.
- Every member has rights equal to every other member's.
- The majority's will must be carried out, and the minority's rights must be preserved.
- The personality and desires of each member should be merged into the larger unit of the organization.

The essential parts of a meeting are:

- Announcing the time, place and purpose of the meeting.
- Calling the group to order.
- Determining those members present and absent.
- Reviewing the group's previous work.
- Deciding on the work of the day.
- Adjourning.

For many groups, something less formal than strict rules of parliamentary procedures is useful, particularly during the business or decision-making part of the meeting.

- Alternative forms are:
  - -Small group discussion.
  - -Consensus building.
  - -Group problem solving.

The two major stumbling blocks have prevented many small groups from effectively and efficiently achieving their goals:

- The practice of making motions prematurely—before discussion on a matter.
- A belief that voting is the only way to make a group decision.

Many group leaders and members have found that unbending adherence to parliamentary procedure can make group process excessively arbitrary and monotonous, and may keep groups from making their own more appropriate rules. Many group decisions are best

made through general statements of consensus. In establishing a group's rules of order, the following should be considered.

- Size:
  - -small, up to 25, informal
  - -medium, up to 100, semiformal
  - -large, more than 100, formal
- If disagreement increases, the formality of parliamentary procedures or some other structured procedure should be increased:
  - -unanimity—use informal
  - -mild disagreement—use semiformal
  - -strong disagreement—use formal
- As group knowledge of parliamentary procedure increases, the formality should increase:
  - -little knowledge—use informal
  - -moderate knowledge—use semiformal
  - -much knowledge—use formal

It is customary for every group to adopt a standard order of business as the meeting's agenda. When an organization's bylaws do not provide for, or require, a specific order, the following order may be used:

- Call to order.
- Roll call.
- Reading and approval of minutes.
- Adoption of agenda.
- Report of officers and standing committees.
- Report of special committees.
- Unfinished "old" business from previous meeting(s).
- New business.
- Program (if any).
- Adjournment.

Almost all local and state offices of the Cooperative Extension Service have free reference materials on parliamentary procedures and can provide technical assistance to community groups and organizations on group leadership, its principles and techniques.

SOURCE: Virginia Cooperative Extension Service. *A Handbook of Parliamentary Procedure*. Blacksburg, VA: Virginia Tech, 1982.

IV-7. Debriefing a Meeting

How often have you left a meeting wondering how effective it was? How often have you left a meeting knowing it was a waste of time, yet no one pointed this out at the meeting but discussed it in the parking lot or hallway? Those parking lot and hallway discussions usually lead to conflict, apathy and frustration. It would be better if your views and those of other members were shared at the meeting.

There are two ways to debrief a meeting.

- One way relies on people talking about what they liked or disliked about the meeting; the discussion can take place in small groups or in the large group.
- Another debriefing technique is to ask people to write down their opinions about the meeting. A group leader should allow 5-10 minutes at the end of a meeting for debriefing.

The following are sample questions for the group to discuss. Only one or two of the questions should be used for a debriefing session. Sharing the answers to these questions can increase the effectiveness of the group.

- Did we accomplish our goals?
- Did we make good use of our time?
- Was the agenda clear? Did we follow it?
- Did we use our group resources effectively?
- Did we clearly identify decisions?
- Did members have a chance to share their views?
- Did we listen to one another?
- Did we end the meeting with a clear direction of where to go from here?

Debriefing takes time, but it is valuable. It can prevent the group from bogging down. It also helps ensure task accomplishment and positive interpersonal relationships.

SOURCE: Adapted from a conference handout, Northwest Regional Educational Lab, Portland, OR, 1991.

IV-8. Meeting Evaluation

1. How useful was our meeting for achieving our objectives?

   Very useful 1 2 3 4 5 Not useful

2. How well organized was the meeting?

   Very organized 1 2 3 4 5 Very disorganized

3. How much opportunity was provided for you to participate?

   Much opportunity 1 2 3 4 5 No opportunity

4. To what extent were your ideas taken into consideration when decisions were made?

   Always 1 2 3 4 5 Never

5. Overall, how would your rate your meeting experience?

   Extremely worthwhile 1 2 3 4 5 Not worthwhile

6. Considering all the activities of our meeting, list the two that you consider *most useful*.

7. Considering all the activities of our meeting, list the two that you consider *least useful*.

Please add any suggestions that you think would be helpful for future meetings.

SOURCE: Adapted from a conference handout, Northwest Regional Educational Lab, Portland, OR, 1991.

IV-9. Ways to Destroy Citizen Councils

- Avoid council involvement in program development, i.e., in helping to determine needs, goals, alternatives, action plans, evaluation.

- Keep functions of council or subcommittee fuzzy by not putting them in writing.
- Make sure the council membership is not representative of clients being served.
- Do not have a specific time period or term of office for membership.
- Do not provide any training to the council or any useful information about the school or the organization.
- Do everything as a committee of the whole; avoid having task groups focus on specific interest or goal areas.
- Change meeting times, places, and days of the week; or meet only on an ad hoc basis.
- Have a person from the school or organization serve as chair (or act like it) and *control* the council.
- Develop the agenda to suit your purposes, without consulting others; do not mail the agenda before the meeting.
- Do not have someone take minutes; do not mail the minutes if any are taken.
- Do nothing with recommendations of the council.
- Allow one or two members to dominate the council.

SOURCE: Adapted from a presentation by Phil Clark, University of Florida at Mid-Atlantic Community Involvement Institute, Richmond, VA, February 1981.

IV-10. A Fable about Practically Nothing

Once upon a time, there was an advisory council that had only four members. It was an organization not unlike our civic clubs, service clubs, church councils, even our professional and technical societies.

The four members were named *Somebody, Everybody, Anybody,* and *Nobody*. All four declared that they supported the aims and objectives of the advisory council.

But *Everybody* was either a golfer, bowler, gardener, or fisherman and used her spare time and talents that way, or stayed at home with friends.

Anybody wanted to go to meetings of the council, but didn't because he was afraid that *Somebody* might give him a job to do, and he just wanted to belong, not work.

Nobody went to the meeting of the advisory council.

Of the four, *Nobody* was the best. For instance, when the advisory council needed a chair for an important committee, *Everybody* thought that *Anybody* should be willing to take on an important job like that and *Somebody* observed that *Everyone* ought to.

Guess who finally got the job? That's right—*Nobody*.

And when the four learned that there was a new resident in the community who was eligible for membership on the advisory council, *Everybody* thought that *Somebody* ought to invite her to join. *Anybody* could have extended the invitation, but didn't.

And can you guess who finally did get around to asking her? That's right—*Nobody* took the job.

And do you know what finally happened to that advisory council? With *Nobody* doing the jobs which had to be done, the advisory council amounted to Practically Nothing, which is the real name of a great many councils, despite their fancy names and high ideals.

Now the moral of the story is this: When you join an advisory council, you must be willing to work at accomplishing its aims and objectives, for if you do not, others will call you

Nobody, regardless of your real name, and your advisory council will become Practically Nothing.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993. (Original source unknown.)

IV-11. School Volunteer Programs

Some of the Basics:

- Develop a written role description.
- Define specific duties and timelines.
- Determine recruitment and screening strategies.
- Plan for volunteer orientation and teacher/volunteer training.
- Establish procedures for ongoing assessment and evaluation that includes recognition of contributions.

Factors for Success of a Classroom Volunteer Program:

- The teacher's commitment to the use of volunteers.
- The teacher's knowledge of the role of volunteers.
- The teacher's attitude and skills in using volunteers.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout, Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993.

IV-12. Developing Volunteer Support and Keeping It

Program Development

School volunteer programs can be initiated by school administrators, staff, parent groups, civic organizations, or a combination of these groups. To ensure a favorable outcome, certain steps are essential.

Awareness

- Appoint a steering committee that includes representatives of the groups whose support you will need to develop an effective program.
- Study model programs in other school systems.
- Request information from the National Association for Partners in Education, Inc.
- Involve teachers and other staff in assessing needs and defining tasks that could be done by volunteers.

Program Goals and Objectives

- Define program goals by developing a mission statement, a broad statement of purpose.
- Develop program objectives, which are specific statements explaining what the program is designed to accomplish: who, what, and when, taking into account the needs assessment done earlier.

Identification of Potential Resources

- Look at your community to discover the variety of resources it has to assist in carrying out your objectives: individuals, groups, organizations, institutions.
- Match groups with tasks they find gratifying because "volunteers work for free but not for nothing."

PROGRAM DESIGN

- Establish program procedures.
- Remember, "A team is a number of people who work together, but you know which one is playing left field and which one is pitching."
- Consider the following:

Standards of ethics	Signing in/out
Health procedures	Teacher-volunteer relationships
Legal procedures	Assigning workspace
Job descriptions	Eating facilities
Parking	Maintaining files/reporting/confidentiality
Reporting absences	Chain of command, channels

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Recruitment	Retention
Orientation/training	Recognition
Assignment	

EVALUATION

Principals	Volunteers
Teaching staff	Coordinators/chairs

RETENTION OF VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

- Volunteers develop a feeling of belonging to the educational team. They develop a sense of pride and ownership and become tremendous boosters of public education. Nurture this feeling of belonging.
- Monitor the volunteer/teacher placements. Be sensitive to problems and encourage flexibility when change is needed.
- Provide ongoing inservice training when appropriate.
- Train teachers to work with volunteers. Many problems can be avoided if volunteers and teachers understand mutual expectations.
- Provide feedback about volunteers' performance and suggestions about teaching, discipline, or human relations techniques.
- Encourage informal and formal recognition activities throughout the year.
- Use suggestions from evaluations when possible. Analyze the information received because it is the pulse of the program.

Source: National Association for Partners in Education (NAPE), which has several excellent manuals on volunteer programs and partnership development. Contact NAPE, 209 Madison Street, Suite 401, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 836-4880.

IV-13. STARTING A SCHOOL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

These guidelines for organizing a school volunteer program (SVP) are suggested by the New Hampshire Partners in Education/New Hampshire School Volunteer Program. Careful, thorough planning and organization are basic to the success of a school volunteer program. All guidelines, forms, and suggestions should be adapted to local needs and wishes.

DEVELOP AWARENESS.

- Those instituting the program should become aware of how school volunteer/ citizen involvement programs can help. How do they fit into what already exists and what should exist in the school system? Determine how a successful SVP can be integrated into the system and how it should operate.
- Ensure that those who will be affected by a SVP (school board, administrators, teachers, parents, students, citizens of the community) are aware that a program is being developed. The strength of any program will depend upon a high level of commitment and involvement by these people.

DETERMINE NEED.

- In order to be successful, a SVP must fill genuine needs. Obtain an accurate and current assessment of school needs through questionnaires, interviews, and by direct observation.
- Such an assessment will help to determine what focus the program will take and be useful later in recruitment and assignment of volunteers.
  Determine:
  -Administrative support.
  -Teacher requests.
  -Community interests.

OBTAIN A FIRM COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATE IN THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM FROM:

- Administration.
- Teachers and other school staff. (Not all teachers need to sign up for a school volunteer. Start with a few, have successful experiences, and grow from there.)
- School board. (The school board should pass a written policy of support for the SVP.)
- Community.

ESTABLISH AN ADVISORY/SUPPORT COMMITTEE FOR THE SCHOOL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

- In conjunction with the school administration, the committee establishes policy and programs for the local SVP.
- The support committee should be representative of the school and community, consisting of designated representatives of volunteers, teachers, administrators, community organizations, etc.
- The committee can serve as a liaison between the school and the community.

APPOINT A VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR. This role is pivotal in creating a successful SVP. If the coordinator participates in program organization and design, and in the preliminary processes of setting up the program, things will be smoother initially and in the future.

- The coordinator may be chosen by an administrator, principal, teacher, superintendent, and/or support committee, with advice from the outgoing coordinator. The approval of the school board may be needed, especially if it is a paid position.
- The coordinator position should be a paid position, if possible.

- Desirable qualifications include experience as a school volunteer, ability to communicate well, interest in education, time to carry out the duties of the job, and enthusiasm.
- The coordinator is responsible to the local administrator.
- The coordinator serves as the program's liaison with other local and state programs.

DEVELOP PROGRAM MISSION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES.

- Program mission is the general philosophical basis for the existence of the SVP.
- Program goals are broad statements of purpose upon which specific objectives are build. A goal statement should reflect the needs identified through a needs assessment process, as well as the philosophy and values of the school, the school district, and the community.
- A program objective is a statement of specific intent—what the program will accomplish. It is measurable and determines the focus of evaluation. Objectives should tell who, what, and when. The results of the needs assessment shape the content of specific objectives.

DEVELOP PROGRAM DESIGN.

- Identify the administrative procedures and structural organization necessary to implement the program design. Determine where the program will fit in the organizational chart of the school district. Consider such matters as health and legal procedures, signing in/out (documentation), parking, reporting absences, assigning work space. Identify decision-making chains of command and channels of communication.
- Write role descriptions and areas of responsibility for those involved in the program, including volunteers, school staff, administrators, and the program coordinator.
- Set up a record keeping system that will allow proper reports to be made and the program to be evaluated. An effective record keeping system will make it possible to answer the following questions easily:
  - -Who is volunteering?
  - -Where and when are volunteers assigned?
  - -What kinds of work are volunteers doing?
  - -How many hours have the volunteers contributed?
  - -Are volunteers reliable in carrying out their assignments?

ORIENT SCHOOL PERSONNEL.

- It is essential for teachers and other school personnel to understand and support the SVP. As the immediate supervisors of the volunteers, staff play a crucial role in the day-to-day operations of the program.
- Teacher responsibilities include:
  - -Identifying services to be performed by volunteers.
  - -Making formal requests for volunteers to the volunteer coordinator.
  - -Providing training for specific duties.
  - -Providing day-to-day supervision of the volunteer.
  - -Reporting problems to the SVP administration.

-Helping volunteers feel satisfaction in the job through frequent "thanks."
-Evaluating volunteer service.

- In requesting volunteers, school personnel should remember:
  -Volunteers work under supervision of a teacher or other school personnel.
  -The volunteer never replaces the teacher.
  -A volunteer should not be expected to do only monitoring. Assignments should be meaningful.
  -Volunteers reinforce the teaching process.

RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS.

- This essential process should be a year-round effort, not just at the start of the school year.
- Parents are an obvious first source of volunteers, but assistance from all segments of the community should be sought, regardless of age, income level, occupation, race, sex, or education level.
- Qualifications for volunteers include:
  -Genuine interest in children.
  -Good health.
  -Reliability and consistency of service.
  -Confidentiality about children.
  -Professional attitude toward service.

PLACE VOLUNTEERS IN MEANINGFUL ASSIGNMENTS.

- Volunteers should complete an application and be interviewed by the coordinator and/or principal or staff member to assess the candidate's skills and wishes. It is appropriate to ask for personal references and to check them.
- Correct placement should include a balancing of the needs of the school with the individual talents, interests, and availability of the potential volunteer.
- Initial assignments should be *temporary* in case an assignment is inappropriate or simply does not work.
- It is best to establish removal procedures at the start, in the unlikely event that a permanent assignment does not work out, or a serious problem arises.
- Reassign the volunteer when possible. When no other solution is possible, an unsatisfactory volunteer should be counseled out of the program by the coordinator and/or principal.

CONDUCT ORIENTATION FOR VOLUNTEERS.

- All volunteers should be familiar with the broad volunteer program and their role in it.
- An orientation, whether group or individual, should help volunteers become familiar with the school setting and include a tour of the facility, explanation of school rules, expectations, school calendar, daily bell schedule, parking, etc.
- Orientation should also include basic requirements expected of school volunteers, including confidentiality and reliability, and housekeeping responsibilities such as signing-in procedures, wearing names tags, dealing with absences, etc. Volunteers should also become familiar with the program's history, purpose (goals and objectives), and design. A written handbook is helpful.

TRAIN VOLUNTEERS.

- Training is the specialized preparation of a volunteer to perform a specific assignment and will vary according to the specific duties to be performed.
- Training is often performed by the individual teacher supervising the volunteer.
- In-service workshops for volunteers help develop skills and increase confidence.
- Many schools encourage volunteers to attend staff in-service training on a space available basis.

PLAN RECOGNITION OF VOLUNTEERS.

- A volunteer program is most successful when volunteers feel satisfaction and appreciation for the work that they do.
- The importance of "Thank you" on a regular basis from students, teachers, administrators, coordinators, and the school board cannot be over-emphasized.
- Special events and materials such as teas, luncheons, student performances, certificates, or pins are also appreciated and provide more formal recognition of the value of volunteers.

EVALUATE PROGRAM.

- Evaluation is the process of collecting and interpreting data to determine the extent to which the initial objectives have been met and to analyze the accomplishments, strengths, and weaknesses of the program.
- Periodic and year-end evaluations of the SVP by the teacher, principal, students, volunteer coordinator, and volunteers should be conducted in order to maintain and improve the quality of the program, justify continued funding of the SVP, gain additional support, and determine future planning.

SOURCE: Adapted from *Handbook for School Volunteer Program (SVP) Coordinators*. Manchester, NH: New Hampshire Partners in Education/New Hampshire School Volunteer Program; provided by Nancy Craig, executive director, September 1993.

IV-14. CATEGORIES OF SCHOOL VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE

ONE-TIME VOLUNTEERS (for those who have limited time, usually one day, from one to six hours). Use for:

- field trips (drive, chaperon)
- school work days
- special skills (e.g., photographer for special event, holiday party)
- career education (e.g., doctor, fireman, data processor, beautician/hair stylist, lawyer, plumber, truck driver)
- special topics (e.g., conservation, pollution, civil rights, energy use, political process)

OFF-CAMPUS VOLUNTEERS (for those who can work only at home, such as parents with small children, aged, or handicapped). Use for:

- developing educational material
- clerical (typing, checking papers)
- youth clubs (e.g., Scouts, Brownies, Big Brother/Big Sister)
- tutoring at home
- child care to allow other parents to visit teacher or work at school
- transportation for other parents

- telephone campaigns, publicity, recruiting volunteers
- telephoning homes of absent students
- clipping and cataloging interesting and timely pictures and stories from newspapers and magazines
- identifying and requesting cooperation from other community agencies by telephone

SHORT-TERM VOLUNTEERS (for those who can give one hour/day for one-two weeks or several hours/day for three-four days). Use for:

- offering mini-courses or short-term enrichment programs, (e.g., knitting, crocheting, photography, gourmet cooking, chess, interior decorating, banking, ecology, career exploration, drama production, painting, writing)
- developing educational material
- building improvement
- cataloging books
- telephoning
- duplicating
- typing
- distributing notices to students
- assisting with assemblies and plays

EXTENDED VOLUNTEERS (for those who can give several hours/week over a semester or a year). Use for:

- tutoring
- library aide
- material production
- supervising lunchroom/playground activities
- classroom aide
- Big Brother/Big Sister
- music lessons
- physical education, art, music (if not routinely offered)
- helping with coordination of volunteer program
- clerical (office): filing, keeping school attendance records, ordering supplies
- clerical (classroom): collecting fees and writing receipts, keeping student progress records, taking attendance

SOURCE: Winecoff, L. and Powell, C. *Organizing a Volunteer Program*. Midland, MI: Pendell Publishing Co., 1978.

IV-15. TRAINING VOLUNTEERS TO WORK IN THE CLASSROOM

Volunteers who are going to be involved with children in the classroom need to have some instruction before they begin working. Teachers and volunteer coordinators will want to ensure that either group or one-on-one training is given. Possible topics include:

- How to begin a lesson.
- Expectations for the children.
- Learning styles of various children.
- Goals of the instruction.

- How to handle discipline problems.
- Ideas for expanding on a lesson once the initial concept is taught.
- Time limits.
- Lesson closure.
- Communication about children's progress.

SOURCE: New Hampshire Partners in Education. *Partnership News*, 22, 1 (Fall 1993).

IV-16. Attracting Today's Volunteers

Common Mistakes

- Recruit before job skills and needs are known.
- Use a scattershot effort not designed to appeal to the kinds of volunteers needed or the skills required.
- Do not take the time to interview and make meaningful task assignments that take advantage of volunteers' skills and interests.

Avoiding Problems

- Do an overall manpower needs assessment to determine what can and cannot be assigned to volunteers.
- Write job descriptions for volunteers.
- Go after volunteers with specific skills.
- Offer flexible hours.
- Seek advice and assistance from special state and university-sponsored volunteer offices.
- Whenever possible, use personal contacts to attract volunteers. Get staff members and other volunteers to enlist friends, family members, and colleagues.
- Tailor publicity to appeal to members of particular racial or ethnic groups.
- Be cautious about using newspapers, magazines, TV, and radio to recruit volunteers; conduct a careful check of respondents' backgrounds for possible criminal or child abuse records.
- Make appeal upbeat, not a desperate plea for help.
- Stress ways the volunteer will benefit from working with the organization.
- Offer short-term opportunities.
- Train volunteers when necessary for the jobs they are to do.
- Eliminate barriers that make people reluctant to volunteer—take the uncertainty out of volunteering. Ask for responsible participation, but be flexible, because people's schedules change.

SOURCE: Stehle, V. "Finding New Ways to Recruit and Keep Today's Volunteers," *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, June 29, 1993.

IV-17. Retention of Volunteer Support

- Volunteers appreciate a feeling of belonging to the educational team. They develop a sense of pride and ownership. Nurture this feeling of belonging.

- Monitor the volunteer-teacher placements. Be sensitive to problems and encourage flexibility when change is needed.
- Provide ongoing inservice training as appropriate.
- Train teachers to work with volunteers. Many problems can be avoided if volunteers and teachers understand mutual expectations.
- Provide feedback about volunteer's performance, suggestions about teaching, discipline, or human relations techniques. Volunteers appreciate the fact that teachers care.
- Use suggestions from evaluations when possible. Analyze the information received, because it is the pulse of the program.

SOURCE: Adapted from handouts provided by M. Averett, Volunteer Coordinator, Lynchburg Virginia Public Schools, 1990.

SUGGESTED GROUP ACTIVITY

Your school has decided to form an advisory council to guide improvement plans for the school. There has never been any kind of formal advisory group in the past. Develop a plan for forming the council. Include identification of the groups of stakeholders who should be represented on the council.

RECOMMENDED READING

Clark, P. A. *Trainers' Handbook for Citizen Council Training.* Gainesville, FL: University of Florida, 1981.

Faust, G. *So You're on the Council.* Fairfax, VA: National Community Education Association, 1987.

Hall, S. H. "The New Faces of Volunteers," *NETWORK for Public Schools.* Washington, DC: National Committee for Citizens in Education, Spring 1991.

Kogan, M. and Packwood, T. *Advisory Councils and Committees in Education.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1992.

National Association of Partners in Education. *Handbook for Principals and Teachers: A Collaborative Approach for Effective Involvement of Volunteers,* Alexandria, VA, 1993.

National Association of Partners in Education. *Involving Youth in the Community,* Alexandria, VA, 1993.

School Improvement Council. *Self-Assessment Profile.* Columbia, SC: South Carolina School Improvement Council, 1992.

Winecoff, L. and Powell, C. *Organizing a Volunteer Program.* Midland, MI: Pendell Publishing Co., 1978.

UNIT V

COMMUNITY POWER STRUCTURE AND POLITICAL REALITIES

Now that the average tenure of big-city school superintendents is less than three years, no one seriously disputes the proposition that politics plays a big role in the decisions about the administration of urban school systems. Unfortunately, politicization has also enveloped smaller school systems. Jerome Murphy, dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, points out that a large part of the problem is that schools, and those who run them, have become "society's saviors and scapegoats." Schools are expected to remediate society's social and economic ills; when the schools' attempted reforms fail to produce quick fixes, critics make a scapegoat of their visible leadership.

Those same critics sometimes fail to acknowledge that most school problems are rooted in community problems—notably poverty and the disintegration of the family—and that lasting solutions will require political action based on the broader community's commitment to equal opportunity for all children, regardless of family income or social status. Since such a commitment almost inevitably involves money—public money—for such things as early childhood education, smaller classes, and more comprehensive social services, we are once again talking about politics and the community power structure.

This unit probes the concept of political power—where it comes from and how it can be used to improve schools. One lesson is clear: effective political leaders learn from and are influenced by a community of collaborators and supporters. Effective leadership is both informed and collegial, and power and politics are intertwined.

INSTRUCTIONAL OUTLINES

Following are instructional outlines and group activities that could be used by trainers in a variety of settings or by students in group discussions or study sessions.

V-1. The Politics of Education

- Educational administration is political because of the authority over the allocation of resources and the transmission of values. It is both the *object* of political activity from influences outside the school and the *subject* of political activity in that its practitioners can shape policies and behaviors within the school system.
- Educational administration is increasingly subject to a turbulent environment.
- School politics reflect diversity, based on community differences.
- School politics shapes and reshapes the behavior of school administrators.

SOURCE: Wirt, F. M. "The Use of Political Science in the Study of Education Administration," *The Changing Politics of Education*, Mosher, E. K. and Wagoner, J. L., eds. Berkeley, CA: McCutchan, 1978.

V-2. Education, Politics, and the Jeffersonian Legacy

Thomas Jefferson was the first American statesman to give firm voice to the connection between public education and the basic tenets of democratic government. Four points emerge from Jefferson's life and writing that connect our educational past to the present and hold meaning for the future.

- Jefferson insisted that education be useful and bear directly on the issues and problems of the living generation.
- He declared that education is a just and highly legitimate claimant on public treasuries.
- His persistent advocacy of a public system of education, even in the face of public apathy and repeated legislative resistance, was grounded in his conviction that education is "a necessary handmaiden to effective citizenship." He warned that the tenor of our politics and the vitality of our national spirit would not likely be improved without some form of "refurbished commitment by educated people to public probity and to the public interest." This view is reflected in one of his most familiar sayings, "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be."
- In Jefferson's own inquiring and active lifestyle, he demonstrated that education can be both an end and a means to psychic fullness and joy or, as he put it, "An educated life is itself a thing of beauty."

SOURCE: Bailey, S. K. "Thomas Jefferson and the Purposes of Education," *The Changing Politics of Education*, Mosher, E. K. and Wagoner, J. L., eds. Berkeley, CA: McCutchan, 1978.

V-3. Bringing the Public Back to Politics

The Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota sponsors the Public Life Project. The project is based on the conviction that the politics of serious democracy is the give and take, messy everyday work of citizens themselves. It is the way we deal with public problems—the issues of our common existence—in many settings, not simply government. Politics is the way people become citizens—accountable players and contributors to the country.

In this view, citizens will have to take back politics and become participants in the creation of our common world. This means that we have to renew the public organizations of politics, deprofessionalizing mediating institutions and reclaiming them as something people can own and use.

Project Public Life has produced a series of guidebooks to help develop and teach approaches to re-engage citizens and youth groups in the public world of problem solving. The following chart illustrates the ways we currently do our public work. These modes of public problem solving are not isolated from one another; each is related to the other, either as a result of, or a response to, inadequacies of any one political practice for solving the large, complex problems we face today. By making each type of politics more public—more open, diverse, participatory, democratic—the practice of public problem solving is enhanced.

MODES OF POLITICAL PROBLEM SOLVING.

- INSTITUTIONAL POLITICS. Examples: Congress, schools, boards.

  Strengths:
  - Has broad-scale effect
  - Mechanisms and processes in place
  - Accountability through voting

  Barriers:
  - Lacks active citizen involvement
  - Experts own the knowledge
  - Hierarchical system, power fragmented

  Using Citizen Politics:
  - Reclaims the public mission
  - Organizes leadership that represents the hierarchy
  - Works laterally, as well as hierarchically

- COMMUNITY POLITICS. Examples: neighborhood crime watch, rehabilitating local parks.

  Strengths:
  - Draws on diversity to solve problems
  - Demonstrates citizen leadership

  Barriers:
  - Takes time
  - Limited in scale

  Using Citizen Politics:
  - Expands role of neighbor to citizen
  - Brings local lessons to larger audiences/arenas

- HELPING POLITICS. Examples: soup kitchens, adopt-a-grandparent, Big Brother/Sister.

  Strengths:
  - Connects individuals
  - Educates participants
  - Provides immediate assistance

  Barriers:
  - Risks becoming a professional service
  - Cannot solve problem on a larger scale
  - Little demonstration of the policy behind the need

  Using Citizen Politics:
  - Explores self-interest/role
  - Understands nature of building diverse public relationships

- PROTEST POLITICS. Examples: marches, demonstrations, boycotts.

  Strengths:
  - A successful organizing tool
  - Increases feeling of community and shared concerns
  - Brings attention to the issue

  Barriers:
  - Is a reaction; rarely sets agenda
  - Collective action denies individual capacity
  - Difficult to sustain
  - Sets up enemies and innocents

  Using Citizen Politics:
  - Builds public mission; identifies diverse self-interests
  - Understands power as relational
  - Creates public spaces for problem solving

SOURCE: Project Public Life. *The Book: The Political Educator's Guide to Citizen Politics.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, 1992; available from Project Public Life, 130 Humphrey Center, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455; (612)625-0142.

V-4. Power—Politics—Policies

POWER IS THE ABILITY OF AN INDIVIDUAL OR A GROUP TO INFLUENCE WHAT UNITS OF GOVERNMENT DO AND HOW THE UNITS ARE VIEWED.

- *Elitist power*—influence by an individual or a relatively small group. Single-elite power structures are most likely to be found in isolated communities dominated by a single industry and in small homogeneous communities.
- *Pluralistic power*—influence by a plurality of power centers, each powerful only within a specific functional area. Pluralistic power structures are most likely to be found in metropolitan areas, in communities with a heterogeneous population, and in communities with a diversity of economic foundations and social cleavages.

POLITICS AND POWER ARE SLIPPERY CONCEPTS, AND POLICY MAKING IS AN UNTIDY PROCESS.

- The power structure of a community refers to its formal and informal networks and the people in them who make things happen.
- Power is structured differently in different communities, and the structure of power changes over time.
- Both power and politics are involved in the allocation and use of resources based on values and definitions of the "public good."

THE STUDY OF PUBLIC POLICY INVOLVES THE DESCRIPTION AND EXPLANATION OF THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF GOVERNMENTAL ACTION.

- To understand who or what makes policy, one must understand the characteristics of the participants, what parts or roles they play, what authority and other powers they hold, and how they deal with and control each other.
- Policy making involves a complex set of forces that together produce effects called "policies."
- Policy making is a complex process, usually without a specific beginning or end or set boundaries.

SOURCE: Adapted from Harrigan, J. J. *Politics and Policy in States and Communities*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1984.

V-5. Kinds of Power and Their Sources

COERCIVE POWER...fear. Induces compliance because failure to comply could lead to punishment, such as undesirable work assignments, reprimands, or dismissals.

CONNECTION POWER..."connections" with influential or important persons inside or outside the organization. Induces compliance to gain the favor or avoid the disfavor of a powerful connection.

ECONOMIC POWER...money and resources. Induces compliance because of the ability to provide or withhold financial incentives.

EXPERT POWER...possession of valuable skills and knowledge. Induces compliance because of expertise in facilitating the work behavior of others.

INFORMATIONAL POWER...access to information perceived as valuable to others. Induces compliance by those who need this information or want to be "in" on things.

LEGITIMATE POWER...the higher the position held, the higher the legitimate power. Induces compliance by those who feel that this person has the right, by virtue of position in the organization, to expect suggestions to be followed.

REFERENT POWER...personal traits. Induces compliance because person is generally liked and admired by others.

REWARD POWER...ability to provide rewards for other people. Seen as inducing compliance because others believe compliance will lead to gaining positive incentives such as pay, promotion, or recognition.

SOURCE: Natemeyer, J. *Situational Leadership, Perception, and the Impact of Power*, Human Resource Development Conference handout, New York, NY, 1985.

V-6. THE POLICY-MAKING PROCESS

Because policies tend to follow from political interaction rather than from analytical conclusion, the process does not correspond to conventionally conceived rational problem solving, which is an intellectual process. Despite having a powerful democratic tradition, the complexities of policy making often cause observers to make contradictory claims:

- It [the policy] does not respond well to popular control *versus* It at least accommodates a variety of sources of fresh information and feeds on new ideas.
- Political inequality silences many citizens *versus* Many interests influence policy making, albeit not equally or easily.
- Democratic policy making keeps the social peace *versus* Many people do not understand that their fellow citizens are a principal obstacle to achieving influence on policy.

Policy making is laborious for all who want to achieve more than a minimum effect. The big share of influence is reserved to those who recognize that an individual participates in the play of power not as a privilege but as an exceedingly demanding task or career. In the last analysis, one does not *play* at the game of power, one *toils* at it.

SOURCE: Lindblom, C. D. *The Policy-Making Process*. Englewood Cliff, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1993.

V-7. MODELS OF POLITICS AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- INSTITUTIONALISM. Traditional study of institutions, their structure, organization, duties, and functions.
- INTEREST THEORY. Common interests band together to press demands.
- ELITE THEORY. A small group of privileged citizens.
- RATIONALISM. Positive cost/benefit ratio between values achieved and values sacrificed; scientific vision.
- INCREMENTALISM. Minor modification over time.
- GAME THEORY. Abstract/deductive model based on competitive situations.
- SYSTEMS THEORY. Comprehensive model, incorporating aspects of above; based on political and environmental interrelationships.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993.

V-8. Generalizations about Community Power

- Politically important people get their political influence from holding positions of institutional leadership.
- The number of key community decision makers is relatively small—less than 1 percent of the population.
- Single, elite-dominated power structures are more likely to be found in isolated communities dominated by a single industry, in small homogeneous communities, and in the South.
- Pluralistic power structures are most likely to be found in metropolitan areas, in communities with a heterogeneous population, and in communities with a diversity of economic and social foundations.
- Power is structured differently in different communities, and structure changes over time.
- The role played by business in community and state politics is rarely as dominant as early studies indicated.
- Since the publication of Hunter's studies in the early 1950s and Dahl's in the 1960s, research on community power has become voluminous, the research methods very sophisticated, and the results often contradictory.

SOURCE: Harrigan, J. J. *Politics and Policy in States and Communities*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1984.

V-9. The Ideological Spectrum

LEFT				RIGHT
2%	25%	41%	28%	4%
Extremely Liberal	Liberal or Slightly Liberal	Moderate Middle of the Road	Conservative or Slightly Conservative	Extremely Conservative
Favors:			Favors:	
Extensive government services			Minimal government services	
Progressive taxes			Regressive taxes	
Strong government			Weak government	
Maximum citizen participation			Limited citizen participation	

SOURCE: Allan, J. *General Social Survey* as cited in Harrigan, J. J. *Politics and Policy in States and Communities*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1984.

V-10. Political Subcultures

Differences in cultural values in the various regions of the United States significantly affect local and state educational systems. Daniel Elazer has suggested that the national political culture is a synthesis of three, jointly residing political subcultures that exist side by side or even overlap one another. The three subcultures are:

- INDIVIDUALISTIC. In this culture, government is viewed simply as a utilitarian institution created to handle those functions that cannot be managed by individuals. Government need not have any direct concern with the question of the

"good society" or the "general welfare." The democratic order is viewed as a marketplace. Emphasis is on private concerns, and a premium is placed on limiting community intervention into private activities. Government is only to "give the public want it wants," and public officials are normally not willing to initiate new programs or open new areas of governmental activity on their own initiative. As a result, the public tends to believe politics is dirty and no place for amateurs to play an active role.

- MORALISTIC. This culture emphasizes the commonwealth concept of politics. Politics is part of people's search for the "good society," and only through the good society can they live the "good life." Individualism is tempered by a general commitment to use communal power to intervene in spheres of public activities when it is considered necessary to do so for the public good and well-being. Participation in community affairs is seen as a civic duty for every citizen, and public officials are viewed as having a moral obligation to promote the general welfare even at the expense of individual loyalties and political friendships.
- TRADITIONALISTIC. This culture views the main role of government as the maintenance of the existing social order and accepts government as a positive factor in the affairs of the community but only to the extent that it maintains and encourages the traditional values and patterns of life. Social and family ties are paramount, and real political power is confined to a relatively small and self-perpetuating group drawn from an established elite of the "good old families."

SOURCE: Thompson, J. T. *Policymaking in American Public Education.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1976.

V-11. POLITICAL CULTURE SURVEY

In addition to being limited by their constitutions, state and local governments are also affected by citizens' attitudes, beliefs, and expectations—the political culture—about what government should do, who should participate, and what rules should govern politics. The following is designed to give greater insight into Elazar's concept of moralistic and individualistic political cultures. These cultures differ sharply in the way they view the purpose of government and the role of the average citizen.

Instructions: Mark A if you agree with a statement or D if you disagree with a statement.

____ 1. The purpose of government should be to achieve the common good.
____ 2. The purpose of government should be limited to protecting a free, competitive economy which will give everyone a chance to make a good living.
____ 3. The government should not initiate new programs unless they are strongly demanded by public opinion.
____ 4. The government should initiate new programs even if they are not strongly demanded by public opinion if the government believes that those programs would be in the public interest.

____ 5. A public bureaucracy is a good thing, because it has a good possibility of being able to deliver services with political neutrality and will not favor some interests over others as would political parties or private enterprises.

____ 6. Public bureaucracies have pluses and minuses. On the plus side, they make the delivery of services more efficient than would delivery of services by a political party. But on the minus side, they make it difficult for political leaders to distribute benefits to people who have supported them.

____ 7. Politics is dirty.

____ 8. Meaningful political participation should be left to professional politicians; the average citizen should content himself or herself with just voting.

____ 9. Everybody would be better off if we had strong political parties and people subordinated their personal preferences to the interest of their party.

____ 10. Everybody would be better off if they insisted on sticking up for the principles they believe in rather than going along with their political party when that makes them compromise their principles.

Score 1 point for each of the following marked A: statements 1, 4, 5, 7, 10.
Score 1 point for each of the following marked D: statements 2, 3, 6, 8, 9.

9-10 points	Extreme Moralistic Culture
6-8 points	Leaning Moralistic
2-5 points	Leaning Individualistic
0-1 points	Extreme Individualistic Culture

SOURCE: Harrigan, J. J. *Politics and Policy in States and Communities: Instructors Manual.* Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1984, 20-21.

V-12. Questions for Gaining an Understanding of the Community Political Process

- Who are the persons and groups who have the power to influence policy concerning the kind of community this should be?
- How do these persons and groups behave in the decision-making process?
- What significant decisions have influenced current community and school issues?
- Which leaders exercised the most power?
- What decisions are pending, and who are the persons who will actively influence them?
- How do community and school leaders work together or compete?
- What are the major formal and informal subsystems in the community and the school?
- What are the latent, inactive sources of influence that could affect future decisions if activated?

SOURCE: Nunnery, M. Y. *Politics, Power, Polls and School Elections.* Berkeley, CA: McCutchan, 1971.

V-13. Issue Identification: A Framework for Collecting Attitudinal Data

- PRESENT: Tell me about any problems or issues that are currently influencing this organization.

- FUTURE: What do you think will happen? What issues or events do you anticipate? Where is this organization headed?
- PAST: Are there past issues or events that have changed the nature or activities of this organization?
- EMERGING AGENDAS: What questions have I not asked you? Is there any information you want to share that would give me a better understanding?

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993.

V-14. INTEREST GROUPS

The chief political role of interest groups is to influence government policies. Interest groups stimulate their members to become active in politics, to vote, to contribute money, to work for candidates, to write letters to their legislators, and even to testify before legislative committees. They also provide numerous nonpolitical benefits to their members, such as insurance policies, social activities, newsletters, conferences, seminars, and other educational activities.

Four kinds of interest groups account for most of the influence on state and local governments:

- ECONOMICALLY MOTIVATED GROUPS. Government policies will either cost or save members money. Business and labor are the most obvious examples.
- PROFESSIONALLY MOTIVATED GROUPS. Their primary purpose is to provide service to their members. Medical and teacher associations are examples.
- PUBLIC AGENCY GROUPS. These provide opportunities for public officials to exchange ideas, lobby collectively, and get up-to-date information on developments and concepts that affect their own public agencies. Examples are the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National Association of County Officials.
- IDEOLOGICAL GROUPS. Most claim to represent a public interest. Many are not permanent, but arise in response to a specific issue. Environmental and religious groups are examples.

The most common political tactics of interest groups are:

- PUBLIC RELATIONS. Trying to create a favorable climate.
- ELECTIONEERING. Trying to elect legislators who are sympathetic.
- LOBBYING. Trying to influence a decision of the legislature or some other government body.

In a study of legislators in four states (Tennessee, Ohio, New Jersey, California):

- Selected business interests were the most powerful.
- Teacher groups were second.
- Organized labor was third.
- Beyond these three, the pattern varies among states.
- Economically motivated groups have the greatest influence; few ad hoc groups are perceived as being among the most powerful.

SOURCE: Harrigan, J. J. *Politics and Policy in States and Communities: Instructors Manual*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1984, 109-119.

SUGGESTED GROUP ACTIVITY

In small groups, identify the 5 or 6 most politically powerful interest groups in your state and community. Does the list include groups from all four categories listed above? Discuss how you measure their power. What kinds of political tactics do the various groups use? Are there major differences between interest groups and their activities in your state compared to in your community?

V-15. Tips for Dealing with Pressure Groups

- Deal with representatives of pressure groups openly and honestly. Be a good listener. Nothing should be hidden.
- Be sure that everyone who needs to know is informed of your contacts with representatives of a pressure group.
- Get together for a visit with an individual or small group. Try to clear the air and get rid of myths.
- Keep in mind that, often, members of a group only want to have their voices heard.
- Seek a common denominator if one can be found.
- Be adaptable if adaptability is reasonable.
- Apply techniques of negotiation. Communicate well and apply consensus building techniques.

SOURCE: Gary Marx, Senior Associate Executive Director, American Association of School Administrators. Lecture and handout. Falls Church, VA, July 1993.

V-16. How to Negotiate Without Giving In

- Focus on the problem.
- Don't bargain over positions.
- Separate people from the problem.
- Focus on *interests*, not positions.
- Invent *options* for mutual gain.
- Insist on using objective *criteria.*
- When your opponents are more powerful—develop your *BATNA* (best alternative to a negotiated agreement).
- When they won't play—use negotiation *jujitsu* (when they attack, refuse to react; instead of pushing back, sidestep the attack and deflect it against the problem).
- When they use dirty tricks—recognize and call them.

SOURCE: Fisher, R. and Ury, W., with Patton, B., ed. *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In.* New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1983.

V-17. Dealing with Criticism

Critics come in all shapes, sizes, and attitudes, and possess a variety of motives. There are hostile critics, uninformed critics, professional critics, and enlightened critics, and there are pressure groups.

Basic steps in dealing with criticism:

- Listen very closely to what the critic has to say.

- Your major goal in dealing with a critic should be *mutual understanding*, not necessarily conversion to your point of view.
- Always listen carefully and ask questions.
- Try to gain insight into the motivation behind the criticism. Getting to know your critic is a good first step.
- Keep in mind that some people just feel a need to complain, but will not want to discuss the issue in depth.
- Avoid defensiveness, which often implies some kind of guilt. Maintain the offensive without being "offensive."
- Always be open and honest.
- Invite the person back for a second visit. Try to reach some form of understanding. It is not necessary to be passive. Explain the school's role. Indicate that you want to reach an understanding and maintain contact.
- Make a follow-up call or visit at an appropriate time.

Answering criticism:

- Be aware of the cultural and intellectual background of your critic. Don't over- or underestimate the intellectual background of your critic.
- Evaluate the emotional climate. Some hostile critics want to release tension more than they want to obtain an answer.
- Find out something about the person's interests and needs. Relate your comments to ideas or organizations the person deals with or understands.
- Include illustrations and examples in your answers. Speak in concrete terms—not just in philosophical terms.
- Avoid professional jargon.
- Avoid side issues and exceptions. Give simple answers to questions posed.
- Don't dwell on the history or background of problems unless asked to do so.
- Avoid long answers that can destroy interest and create more hostility.
- If possible, deal with critics individually, not at public meetings.

SOURCE: Gary Marx, Senior Associate Executive Director, American Association of School Administrators. Lecture and handout. Falls Church, VA, July 1993.

V-18. Politicians' Views of Educators

- Educators are arrogant and, worse yet, sanctimonious. They act as if they are the only ones who have high standards and sincere commitment to decent public service. They act as if educators have all the answers.
- Rarely do educators have the information we need to make sound policy decisions. We need facts, not generalities. We also need practical answers, not pie-in-the-sky responses to immediate problems. Sometimes we suspect that they even withhold information we are entitled to.
- Educators ought to know how to communicate, but there are few groups that speak less clearly, less concisely, or with more obfuscation. What we get is usually too olympian, too utopian, too abstract, or too fuzzy to be helpful. Educators tend to talk

over our heads in jargon. There is also a tendency to talk down to us as if we were some lower form of intelligence.

- Educators have little understanding of the legitimacy and importance of the political process. This ignorance is expressed in a many ways:
  - -Educators view our difficult work of negotiating, compromising, balancing interests, and refining or fine tuning public policies as dirty, underhanded, or even immoral.
  - -They act as if incrementalism is evil.
  - -Educators also run counter to sound political practice by splitting up, instead of presenting a united educational front—elementary/secondary *versus* higher education *versus* community college; administrators *versus* teachers; most everyone *versus* the state educational agency. We are faced with warring factions, a situation in which almost everyone loses.
  - -If politicians suggest that educators build coalitions with powerful non-educator groups, educators respond with righteous indignation that they are "above politics." The fact is that some of the most effective lobbyists for education are not educators.
- Educators only want more money and seldom consider how to raise revenue, nor do they recognize that we live in a tough world with many competing priorities.
- Educators give lip service to accountability but fail to do anything to bring it about.
- Educators blow with the wind; they are addicted to fads and quick cures. They cave in to popularized notions that usually lead to swift disillusionment.
- Educators refuse to admit that, just like other groups, they are promoting their own interests, economic and professional. They spend much energy talking about "the profession" instead of what is good for kids.

SOURCE: Halperin, S. *A Guide for the Powerless and Those Who Don't Know Their Own Power.* Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership, 1981, 16-17.

V-19. Quotable Quotes

- *Ideas are great arrows, but they must have a bow. Politics is the bow of idealism.* Bill Moyers
- *The basic requirement for the understanding of the politics of change is to recognize the world as it is. We must work with it on its terms if we are to change to the kind of world we would like it to be.* Saul Alinsky
- *The time to make friends is before you need them.* Lyndon B. Johnson
- *To succeed, planning alone is insufficient. One must improvise as well.* Isaac Asimov

SOURCE: Halperin, S. *A Guide for the Powerless and Those Who Don't Know Their Own Power.* Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership, 1981.

V-20. Power and Politics for the School Administrator

- Understanding and using power are the marks of an effective administrator.
- Effective power is face to face.
- One must be able to win people over, not force them.

- The person talking is not necessarily the person with power.
- Administrators are power brokers—the best way to multiply power is to divide it, and the best way to possess it is to give it away.
- Making a difference is the goal; power is the vehicle.
- The "big guns" of the administrator are influence and persuasion.
- Conflict is an administrator's way of life; if you can't accept it, don't become the boss.
- If you are too busy doing your job to worry about politics, you aren't doing your job.

SOURCE: Black, J. A. and English, F. W. *What They Don't Tell You in Schools of Education About School Administration.* Lancaster, PA: Technomic Publishing Co., 1986.

V-21. Realities of the Political Process

- There is an almost limitless information base. Deciding which information is essential and needed for making a decision is a skill.
- The timing and sequence of events and opportunities are often beyond an individual's control.
- Conflict or the potential for conflict is almost always present.
- The art of winning involves coalition building and networking. Determining how everybody can win requires a view from all perspectives—a walk in the other person's shoes.
- The prospects for change are almost always incremental.
- There are formal and informal influencing processes.
- There are centralized and decentralized power roles.
- Do your homework before going public.
- Monitoring the process is time-consuming and continual.
- A foundation is essential—have a plan and work it.
- Compromise is critical, and a broad perspective is helpful.
- The K.I.S.S. principle—keep it short and simple—is often the best one to use.

SOURCE: Adapted from Halperin, S. A. *Guide for the Powerless and Those Who Don't Know Their Own Power.* Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership, 1981.

V-22. Pointers for Political Survival

- Issues may not be as important as the decision-making process.
- Political communication has direct and indirect messages; indirect messages are often more important.
- There are no permanent friends or permanent enemies in politics.
- Never surprise your friends.
- Politics is full of humor (sarcasm, putdowns, snide remarks, etc.); don't be offended.
- Politics is a "chit" economy in which tradeoffs are made and expected.
- Give credit overtly.
- Take credit in the backroom. Strokes to yourself are easily spotted as self-serving.
- Politics is not an easy game.
- Work with resistance; a bigger hammer isn't the answer.

- Try to understand behavior outside the context of a specific issue—*know the person.*
- A good politician works with those who are persuadable.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia 1993.

RECOMMENDED READING

Colby, A. and Damon, W. *Some Do Care: Contemporary Lives of Moral Commitment.* New York, NY: Free Press, 1992.

Firethorn Quarterly: A Conversation About Making Democracy Work. Chicago, IL: Firethorn Institute, 1 (Spring 1993) and 2 (Summer 1993).

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UNIT VI

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Complex and interrelated social and economic problems have created a broad array of service needs in almost every community, requiring more resources than any single agency or organization can provide. A partnership approach provides a method for involving many segments of a community in addressing those needs.

In education, "partnership" encompasses three levels of working relationships. These levels may be viewed as a continuum:

- Cooperation is at one end, implying a simple working together toward a common goal.
- Coordination is in the middle range, entailing a sharing of resources and implying joint planning, development, and implementation of programs.
- Collaboration is at the other end, implying greater sharing and a more intensive, concerted effort including joint resource allocation and joint monitoring and evaluation.

The most publicized educational partnerships are those between schools and businesses. Businesses have offered students jobs and job counseling, assisted administrators in solving management problems, and even used their influence to affect political and financial issues of concern to schools. Less well publicized are school partnerships with agencies and organizations, including higher education institutions.

A relatively new type of collaboration between schools and community agencies, community service-learning, is receiving increasing attention by educators looking for ways to provide new paradigms for learning. As defined by the National Youth Leadership Council,

> *Service-learning* is student learning and development through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet real community needs and that are coordinated in collaboration with the school and community. The service-learning is integrated into the students' academic curriculum and includes structured time to talk, write, and think about what they did and saw during the actual service activity (National Service Learning Initiative 1990).

Regardless of the type of partnership, the motivation for entering into one is likely to be a need or desire to:

- Reduce or spread costs by sharing resources.
- Provide or receive support for a specific program or activity.
- Deliver more effective services through coordinated efforts.
- Be more responsive to needs.

There is no single model for an educational partnership. The extent of cooperation-collaboration depends on each partner's willingness to share its resources, both human and physical. Planning is the key to success.

Although the potential impact of educational partnerships is great, there are some constraints to their development. One major constraint is the perspective of educational administrators and faculty who work in the traditional "professional service model" and see their job as "delivering" services to students, parents, and the community, rather than working with them to promote learning. Another is the absence of regular communications between schools and

other agencies and organizations. There are also real and perceived differences in organizational patterns, operating procedures, schedules, and personnel policies.

Those educators who have incorporated working partnerships into their daily administrative routine are convincing advocates of the benefits of collaboration at the community level, whatever the initial difficulties.

INSTRUCTIONAL OUTLINES

Following are instructional outlines and group activities that could be used by trainers in a variety of settings or by students in group discussions or study sessions.

VI-1. COLLABORATION: FACTORS INFLUENCING SUCCESS

COLLABORATION IS a mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve common goals. The relationship includes a commitment to: a definition of mutual relationships and goals; a jointly developed structure and shared responsibility; mutual authority and accountability for success; and sharing of resources.

FACTORS INFLUENCING the success of collaboration are:

1. ENVIRONMENT
   - HISTORY OF COLLABORATION OR COOPERATION. A history of collaboration or cooperation exists in the community and offers the potential partners an understanding of the required roles and expectations and enables them to trust the process.
   - COLLABORATIVE GROUP SEEN AS A LEADER IN THE COMMUNITY. The collaborative group (and by implication, the agencies in the group) is perceived within the community as a leader—at least related to the goals and activities it intends to accomplish.
   - POLITICAL/SOCIAL CLIMATE FAVORABLE. Political leaders, opinion-makers, persons who control resources, and the general public support (or at least do not oppose) the missions of the collaborative group.
2. MEMBERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS
   - MUTUAL RESPECT, UNDERSTANDING, AND TRUST. Members of the collaborative group share an understanding and respect for each other and their respective organizations: how they operate, their cultural norms and values, limitations, and expectations.
   - APPROPRIATE CROSS SECTION OF MEMBERS. The collaborative group includes representatives from each segment of the community who will be affected by its activities.
   - MEMBERS SEE COLLABORATION AS IN THEIR SELF-INTEREST. Collaborating partners believe the benefits of collaboration will offset costs, such as loss of autonomy and turf.
   - COLLABORATING PARTNERS ARE ABLE TO COMPROMISE. The many decisions within a collaborative effort cannot possibly fit perfectly the preferences of every member.
3. PROCESS/STRUCTURE
   - MEMBERS SHARE A STAKE IN BOTH PROCESS AND OUTCOME. Members of a

collaborative group feel "ownership" of both the way the group works and the results or product of its work.

- MULTIPLE LAYERS OF DECISION MAKING. Every level (upper management, middle management, operation) within each organization in the collaborative group participates in decision making.
- FLEXIBILITY. The collaborative group remains open to varied ways of organizing itself and accomplishing its work.
- DEVELOPMENT OF CLEAR ROLES AND POLICY GUIDELINES. The collaborating partners clearly understand their roles, rights, and responsibilities and how to carry out those responsibilities.
- ADAPTABILITY. The collaborative group has the ability to sustain itself in the midst of major changes, even if it needs to change some major goals, members, etc., in order to deal with changing conditions.

4. COMMUNICATION
   - OPEN AND FREQUENT COMMUNICATION. Collaborative group members interact often, update one another, discuss issues openly, convey all necessary information to one another and to people outside the group.
   - ESTABLISHED INFORMAL AND FORMAL COMMUNICATION LINKS. Channels of communication exist on paper, so that information flow occurs. In addition, members establish personal connections—producing a better, more informed, and more cohesive group working on a common project.
5. PURPOSE
   - CONCRETE, ATTAINABLE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES. Goals and objectives of the collaborative group are clear to all partners, and can realistically be attained.
   - SHARED VISION. Collaborating partners have the same vision, with clearly agreed upon mission, objectives, and strategy. The shared vision may exist at the outset of collaboration, or the partners may develop a vision as they work together.
   - UNIQUE PURPOSE. The mission and goals or approach of the collaborative group differ, at least in part, from the mission and goals or approach of the member organizations.
6. RESOURCES
   - SUFFICIENT FUNDS. The collaborative group has an adequate, consistent financial base to support its operations.
   - SKILLED CONVENER. The individual who convenes the collaborative group has organizing and interpersonal skills, and carries out the role with fairness. Because of these characteristics (and others), the convener is granted respect or "legitimacy" by the collaborative partners.

SOURCE: Mattessich, P. W. and Monsey, B. R. *Collaboration: What Makes It Work*. St. Paul, MN: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, 1993.

VI-2. A Continuum of School-Community Partnerships

Institutional One-on-One (Sponsor→Beneficiary)	Cooperative Agreements (Sponsor↔Beneficiary)	Comprehensive Collaboratives (Sponsors ↔ Beneficiaries)
Focuses	Focuses	Focuses
• Tutoring	• Needs assessment	• Needs assessment
• Mentoring	• Planning	• Broad-based multi-agency planning
• Field trips	• Research and development	• Research and development
• Guest speakers	• Training in new technology	• Long-term institutional commitment
• Summer jobs	• Teacher/administrator professional development	• Commonly defined vision
• Paid work-study	• Advocacy—policy/laws	• Goals/objectives by consensus
• Scholarships	• School-based health clinics	• Shared authority/decision making
• Incentives and recognition awards	• Magnet schools	• New roles/relationships
• Demonstrations	• Funds to support innovation	• Advocacy—policy/laws
• Use of business facilities	• Advice on restructuring schools	• Integration of multiple cross-institutional programs
• Loaned executives	• "Focused" (e.g., on dropout or teen pregnancy prevention)	• "Comprehensive" services, focusing on the whole child
• Volunteer services		
• Mini-grants for teachers		
• Teaching assistance		
• Donations of equipment/supplies		
• Public relations		

SOURCE: "Collaboration to Build Competence," *ERIC Review*, Fall 1992.

VI-3. Characteristics of Successful Collaborative Services

- They are generally comprehensive, either directly offering a wide array of services, or providing an easy entry point to services, delivered flexibly and coherently.
- They move beyond crisis management and even early intervention to focus on prevention and development.
- They cross professional and bureaucratic boundaries to offer coherent services, often in nontraditional settings and at nontraditional hours.
- They provide staff with the time, training, and skills necessary to build relationships of trust and respect.
- They select one staff member who is from the local community and can act as a facilitator.
- They involve both teachers and parents in the communication loop.
- They deal with the child as part of the family, and the family as part of the educational system.
- They build in accountability, with creative and meaningful measures.

SOURCE: *Educational Digest*, ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, Institute for Urban and Minority Education, 1992.

VI-4. Major Barriers to Collaboration

A major obstacle to collaboration is that different agencies have different definitions of the same problem. This obstacle gets expressed in the actual process of collaboration, in the mindsets of the people engaged in collaborative efforts, in the ways that resources are allocated, and in the policies that govern the delivery of human services. Furthermore, process-oriented barriers are often so substantial that they permeate the other categories.

- PROCESS-ORIENTED BARRIERS refers to the methods of communication and problem-solving used to establish goals and objectives, agree on roles, make decisions, and resolve conflicts. These barriers relate to the formulation of a broad and practical vision including overcoming power and control issues; lack of trust, defeatism/skepticism; "it's not my job" attitude; different definitions of the problem; ignorance of how each other works; danger of setting lowest common denominator goals; and different philosophies.
- PEOPLE BARRIERS refers to participation, leadership and staff training of individuals who implement the activities of interagency initiatives; the difficulty of ensuring full *buy-in* by line staff; and the difficulty (without training, revised job descriptions, and a stable workforce) of (1) overcoming resistance to change, and (2) enabling staff to see the pay-off in new ways of doing business.
- RESOURCE BARRIERS refers to the lack of sufficient funds to provide necessary services; erosion of trust among potential collaborators who increasingly must compete for scarce resources; and conflict over who pays for what in partnership efforts. Lack of time to engage in collaborative activities is also a resource factor.
- RESOURCE ISSUES and PROCESS FACTORS are intimately related, since the dictates of self-preservation—the quantity of resources and access to those resources—make it difficult to trust each other and to share scarce resources.
- POLICY BARRIERS refers to the set of federal, state, and local rules, regulations, policies, guidelines, and definitions each agency brings to the table that affect the ease or difficulty with which partners can work together. Included in this category are semantic difficulties, e.g., using similar words with different meanings or terms with unclear meanings; and differences in state and federal statutory requirements, e.g., eligibility and reporting regulations, separate funding streams, confidentiality rules and other policies that interfere with joint efforts.

SOURCE: Institute for Educational Leadership. *National Support for Collaboration: Needs of States and Localities,* Occasional Paper #15. Washington, DC, 1992.

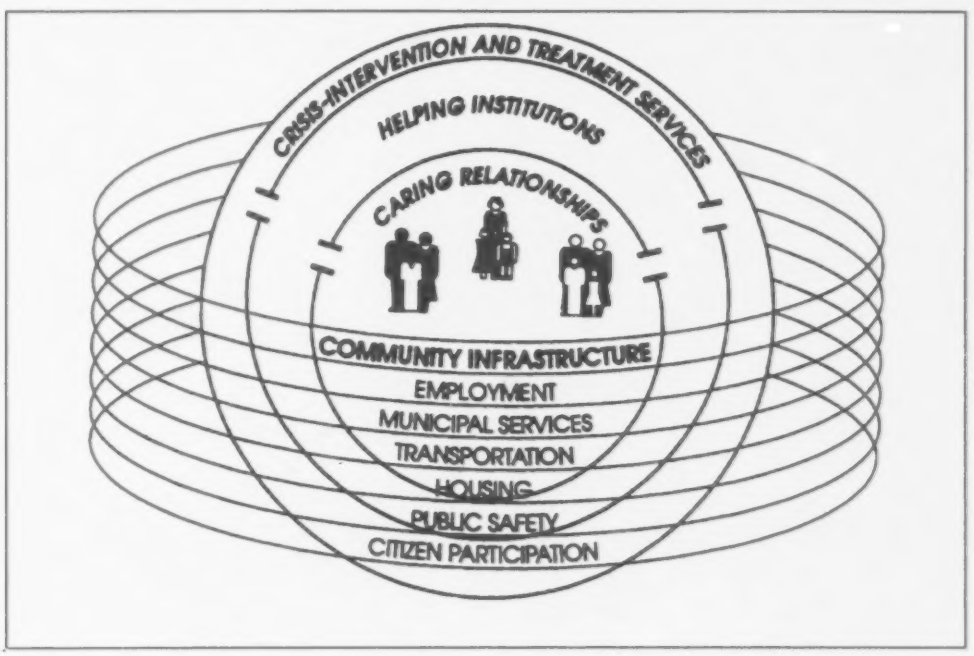
VI-5. Communities Where Learning Can Happen: Envisioning an Ideal Model

In communities where learning can happen, families and children have basic physical and emotional security, opportunities for membership and participation in society, flexible and responsive educational experiences, and a safe and secure environment.

Three interconnected rings of care and support surround children and families:

- Closest to the family is a circle of CARING RELATIONSHIPS—the extended family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers who together are the first source of support.

- The second ring embracing the family is a wide, cushioning band of HELPING INSTITUTIONS. This ring contains schools, churches, community organizations, libraries, recreation centers, community colleges, hospitals and health centers, and voluntary agencies. Together, these institutions help *all* young people and their families develop their talents and interests as well as their capacity to learn and apply knowledge.
- A third, much narrower, ring contains specialized CRISIS-INTERVENTION AND TREATMENT SERVICES—child welfare, income maintenance, juvenile justice, mental health, drug and domestic abuse treatment—to help people for whom prevention was not enough.
- SWINGING DOORS connect each of these rings so that families can easily move back and forth across and within each ring to find the degree of help they need. Together, these rings comprise a service delivery system that is accessible, integrated, and designed to strengthen family self-sufficiency.



A Vision of Communities Where Learning Can Happen

SOURCE: Melaville, A. I., and Blank, M. J., with Asayesh, G. *Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services.* Washington, DC: U.S. Office of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, 1993.

VI-6. The Current System and How It Falls Short

"It's a fractured system...developed as a knee-jerk reaction to specific problems: a problem arises, you treat the symptoms, and create a structure around the problem. Then a problem crops up somewhere else, another structure is created. It becomes a jerry-rigged, Rube Goldberg contraption." David Tobis, Center for the Study of Family Policy.

One analysis of the current system identified several critical flaws.

- SERVICES ARE CRISIS-ORIENTED, designed to address problems that have already occurred rather than to offer support of various kinds to prevent difficulties from developing.
- THE SOCIAL WELFARE SYSTEM DIVIDES THE PROBLEMS OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES INTO RIGID AND DISTINCT CATEGORIES that fail to reflect interrelated causes and solutions. Services designed to correspond to discrete problems, commonly referred to as categorical problems, are administered by literally dozens of agencies. Each has its own particular focus, source of funding, guidelines, and accountability requirements. Services are provided within, rather than across, service categories.
- THE SYSTEM LACKS FUNCTIONAL COMMUNICATION among the various public and private agencies that comprise it. Agencies with pronounced dissimilarities in professional orientation and institutional mandates seldom see each other as allies. Operating like ships passing in the night, agencies have little opportunity to draw on services available throughout the community that might complement one another.
- SPECIAL AGENCIES ARE UNABLE TO CRAFT COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTIONS TO COMPLEX PROBLEMS. Existing staff typically represent only a narrow slice of the professional talent and expertise needed to plan, finance, and implement the multiple services characteristic of successful interventions.

SOURCE: Melaville, A. I., and Blank, M. J., with Asayesh, G. *Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services.* Washington, DC: U.S. Office of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, 1993.

VI-7. Characteristics of Healthy Communities for Youth

What factors contribute to differences among communities? Based on its own research and work with numerous communities, the Search Institute has developed a list of key characteristics of healthy communities for youth.

COMMUNITY MINDSET

- Children and youth are a top priority.
- All citizens have responsibility for children and youth.
- Community understands that all children need more assets.
- Emphasis is placed on building a strong foundation in early childhood.
- Community is committed to building family strengths.
- Community "wraps its arms" around teenagers.
- Community balances prevention and promotion.

COMMUNITY DATA

- Community has gathered good data on pro-child resources, programs, and strategies.
- Community understands levels of assets and at-risk behaviors in its own youth and monitors changes in assets and at-risk behaviors.

COMMUNITY NORMS

- The community shares and demonstrates in concrete ways basic values such as responsibility, respect, honesty, justice, and equality.
- Community has clear and consistent alcohol and drug policies that are consistently and actively put into practice.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING

- After-school care is available for all children and youth.
- There is a rich variety of school-based, community, and religious organizations that involve most youth in constructive activities.
- Organizations have expansive missions that include both prevention and promotion.
- Youth programs operate with a partnership mentality.
- Programs reinforce each other with appropriate redundancy.
- Peers educate and support each other.
- Mentoring is widespread (youth to youth, adult to youth).
- Young people are involved in and empowered through community service.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

- Parent education is available, and parents participate in it.
- Adult volunteers receive training and continuing education.
- Schools are caring and supportive of youth.

COLLABORATION

- Community cooperation and collaboration occur effectively across multiple sectors.

SOURCE: Benson, P. L. "25 Characteristics of Healthy Communities," *Source*. IX, 3 (September 1993).

VI-8. CHANGING DIRECTION: TOWARD A PROFAMILY SYSTEM

America needs to move toward a system that corrects the shortcomings of the current system and provides a new approach to service delivery. The new system—a profamily system—must greatly expand the capacity of helping institutions and crisis-intervention and treatment services to work together. It must create new working relationships, operating assumptions, and high-quality services that support families and help them meet their potential.

A truly profamily system must be:

- COMPREHENSIVE. A variety of opportunities and services respond to the full range of child and family needs.

- PREVENTIVE. The system is geared toward preventing problems rather than reacting to them. "Front-end" developmental and preventive services receive the bulk of resources.
- FAMILY-CENTERED AND FAMILY-DRIVEN. Family members are related and so are their problems. Thus, the system meets the needs of whole families, not just individuals.
- INTEGRATED. Separate services are connected by common intake, eligibility determination, and individual family service planning so that each family's entire range of needs is addressed. An integrated system makes it easier for families to get the help they need and ensures a more efficient use of service providers' time and resources.
- DEVELOPMENTAL. Assessment of children's and families' changing needs is a cornerstone of the system. Plans are responsive to age, developmental status, and other unique conditions; services are not static.
- FLEXIBLE. The system is agile and adaptable. It provides frontline workers with the discretion to respond quickly to family needs. Rules that constrain the ability of agencies to address emergencies or prevent them from occurring are waived, while those that protect families' due process and privacy rights are clarified.
- SENSITIVE TO CULTURAL, GENDER, AND RACIAL CONCERNS. Services reflect the belief that membership in a group with a specific history and set of values and traditions is a source of great strength. Respect for cultural differences is formalized in systemwide policy statements, carried out in staff development activities, and reflected in the diversity of governing boards and staff.
- OUTCOMES-ORIENTED. Performance is measured by improved outcomes for children and families, not simply by the number and kind of services delivered. Service providers help families set reasonable goals and share responsibility for attaining them.

SOURCE: Melaville, A. I., and Blank, M. J., with Asayesh, G. *Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services*. Washington, DC: U.S. Office of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, 1993.

VI-9. REALIZING THE VISION: A FIVE-STAGE PROCESS FOR CHANGE

STAGE 1. GETTING TOGETHER.
- Decide to act.
- Involve the right people.
- Commit to collaborate.

STAGE 2. BUILDING TRUST.
- Develop a base of common knowledge.
- Conduct a community assessment.
- Define shared vision and goals.
- Develop a mission and community presence.

STAGE 3. DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC PLAN.
- Focus on a neighborhood.

- Conduct an neighborhood analysis.
- Define target outcomes.
- Design service delivery prototype.
- Develop technical tools.
- Formalize interagency relationships.

STAGE 4. TAKING ACTION.

- Formulate staffing strategy.
- Implement outreach strategy.
- Recognize diversity.
- Evaluate progress.

STAGE 5. GOING TO SCALE.

- Adapt and expand prototype.
- Develop collaborative leaders.
- Develop interprofessional training.
- Deepen collaborative culture.
- Design a fiscal strategy.
- Build a governance structure.
- Build community constituency.

NOTE: TAKE TIME TO REFLECT AND CELEBRATE BETWEEN EACH STAGE.

SOURCE: Melaville, A. I., and Blank, M. J., with Asayesh, G. *Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services.* Washington, DC: U.S. Office of Educational Research and Improvement, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, 1993.

VI-10. CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE INITIATIVES TO CHANGE SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEMS

Numerous cities and counties, often with financial support and technical assistance from the state and private foundations, have formed collaboratives and begun initiatives to create more responsive child and family services.

Their combined experience suggests that effective service integration initiatives have several common characteristics:

- They are school-linked.
- They are rooted in the community and closely connected to state government.
- They use place-specific service delivery prototypes to create systems change.
- They are data driven.
- They are financially pragmatic.
- They use new forms of interprofessional preservice and inservice education, training, and leadership development.
- They use the collaborative's influence to engage all citizens in decisions about the social and economic well-being of children and families.
- They balance the political and technical dimensions of systems change.

SOURCE: Melaville, A. I., and Blank, M. J., with Asayesh, G. *Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services.* Washington, DC: U.S.

Office of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, 1993.

VI-11. Emerging Criteria for School-Linked Services

Successfully linking social and health services to the school will be a slow and difficult process for many reasons:

- The education, health, and social services systems are massive and have been built up over decades.
- Each has a unique history and funding structure.
- They are guided by their own groups of professionals, specifically trained and unaccustomed to sharing either responsibility or authority with other disciplines and professions.
- They all are struggling to develop appropriate services for children and families who have needs that are substantially different from those of the past.
- A significant gap remains between defining the theoretical components for school-linked services and implementing them in practice.

The following criteria for effective school-linked services are still evolving with experience:

- Participating agencies will have to change the way they deliver services to children and families and work with each other.
- Participating agencies' planning and implementation should not be dominated by any one institution—schools or health and social services agencies.
- School-linked services should be comprehensive and tailored to the needs of individual children and their families.
- Each participating agency should redirect some of its current funding to support the new collaboration.
- School-linked service efforts should involve and support parents and the family as a whole.
- School-linked service efforts should be both willing and able to collect data about what is attempted and achieved, and at what cost.
- School-linked service efforts should be able to respond to the diversity of children and families.

These critical issues must be addressed more fully and consistently as school-linked services are planned and implemented:

- Systemic change in the schools and child-serving agencies should be considered in relationship to broad reform efforts.
- Targeting of services should ensure some level of access to all children.
- Financing strategies require careful thought and can greatly affect whether the new service succeeds or fails.
- Evaluation should be both process- and outcome-oriented and be undertaken with a long-term view, with attention paid to behavioral outcomes and to changes in knowledge and attitudes.

- State and federal leadership should be collaborative with local leadership, particularly in helping with technical assistance, funding, evaluation, and elimination of constraining requirements and restrictions.
- Political and historical barriers may make the school-linked approach unworkable in some communities, and alternative restructuring methods may be needed.

Factors supporting the implementation of school-linked services:

- Interest in school-linked services is strong at many different levels of policy making.
- Efforts to date have incorporated important lessons from past experience.
- Efforts are supported by a climate of reform.
- There is a developing consensus about the importance of evaluation.

SOURCE: Center for the Future of Children. *The Future of Children.* Los Altos, CA: David and Leslie Packard Foundation, 1992.

VI-12. Qualities and Skills of Collaborative Leaders

Leadership is an important factor in collaborative endeavors. Leading a collaborative, where no one has control over all the people and organizations at the table, is different from leadership in traditional organizational settings. Participants in a National Dialogue on Leadership for Collaboration identified the following qualities and skills of collaborative leaders:

- LISTENING AND COMMUNICATING. Collaborative leaders consciously reach out to *talk with* and *learn from* the consumers of their services and the front-line workers who deliver those services. They value and nurture dialogue with leaders in order to gain a greater understanding of needs, concerns, and possibilities, and to build bridges within and across organizations and sectors in the community.
- BUILDING VISIONS. Collaborative leaders have skills to develop visions—clear pictures of how people, organizations, and community must come together to build a better future for children and families. They work to communicate that vision throughout their communities, adapting the vision to achieve an ever-increasing commitment to making it a reality.
- RISK-TAKING. Collaborative leaders do more than take risks themselves; they create a climate in which other people are willing to take risks, knowing that mistakes are to be viewed as learning experiences and will not lead to punitive action.
- RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY. Collaborative leaders seek not only tolerance, but acceptance, inclusion and celebration. They strive to strengthen communications among different people and groups, and bring to the collaborative dialogue people who reflect the diversity of their communities.
- KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IN GROUP PROCESS. Collaboration involves numerous meetings at which people must sort through problems, create alternative solutions, and make decisions. Collaborative leaders have the group process skills needed to run effective meetings. They ensure the active involvement of all participants, give them a sense of ownership in the process, and obtain the commitment to follow through on the group's decisions.

- CONFLICT MANAGEMENT. Rather than overlooking tough issues about which conflict might arise, collaborative leaders have the skills to manage conflict. They recognize that by working through conflicts, groups strengthen their capacity to solve complex problems.
- ORGANIZED/DECISIVE. Collaborative leaders balance the need for people to learn about each other and the agencies/organizations they represent with a natural bent toward thoughtful decisions and actions. They are able to move groups toward decision in ways that maintain group cohesion.
- CONSENSUS BUILDING. Collaborative leaders use the group's vision to drive toward consensus on real changes that push people and agencies beyond traditional boundaries.
- MOTIVATIONAL/PASSIONATE. Collaborative leaders motivate others by communicating the group's vision, and by constantly nurturing other leaders and the many people with whom they work. Their passion provides fuel for others, and helps groups overcome the obstacles to positive outcomes.
- EMPOWERING. Collaborative leaders give the work of the collaborative to the partners who are at the table. They recognize that nurturing leadership in others is as essential to the prudent exercise of leadership as leading itself.
- REFLECTIVE. Collaborative groups can be described as "learning communities," in which people challenge old ideas and assumptions and learn new ways of acting. Collaborative leaders facilitate the group's reflections so that learning can be captured and new behaviors internalized.
- FLEXIBLE. Collaborative processes do not follow a linear path. This requires that collaborative leaders remain flexible, adapting yesterday's ideas and today's plans to tomorrow's realities.
- KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT OTHER SYSTEMS. To make interagency collaboration work, leaders should have knowledge of systems other than their own with which they must work. This knowledge enables them to ask more probing questions, moving people to think beyond the established framework of their agencies.

SOURCE: Institute for Educational Leadership. *Leadership for Collaboration: A National Dialogue*, Washington, DC, 1992.

VI-13. WAYS BUSINESS CAN SUPPORT FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

Following are some ways that employers can support family involvement in education and help produce better educated students:

- Use company publications to advise employees of current issues and needs in education, of the support they can get from the company, and opportunities for them to help through volunteer efforts.
- Encourage employees with children to support and be involved in the learning process of their children.
  - -Use the company newsletter to publicize employee involvement in schools as volunteers and in other ways, and emphasize the importance of parental participation in parent-teacher meetings and other school activities.

-Encourage employees to attend parent/teacher conferences by using flexible time, job sharing, or compensatory time, or by adjusting work schedules.

- Support the retention and recruitment of high quality teachers and administrators.
- Support schools through a meaningful partnership, including employee volunteer involvement; sharing of expertise, facilities and equipment; and/or financial assistance. This may range from forming a partnership with a school or participating in existing programs.
  - -Encourage and recognize employee volunteers for tutoring, presenting mini-courses, judging projects, exploring career options, etc.
  - -Provide release time for employee volunteers.
  - -Contribute materials, equipment and meeting space.
  - -Invite students for on-site visits and field trips at business locations.
- Provide information on the increasing skill requirements of the workforce.
- Advise students on career opportunities, college programs, and scholarships.
- Participate in local education committees and school-sponsored events.
- Meet with local school officials to share ideas of mutual interest in the management and administration of the schools.
- Assure graduates of local high schools of the opportunity to interview for available jobs.
  - -Require transcripts of grades and/or educational portfolios with employment appli-cations.
  - -Increase student awareness of job opportunities and requirements through school career days and other appropriate means.
- Encourage employees to serve as role models and examples of success.
- Invite a group of students as guests for lunch in your plant or office once a month.
- Encourage employees to have their children visit them at work, so the children will know where their parents work and what they do.
- Encourage all employees to continue their education.
  - -Encourage employees without high school diplomas to complete the requirements for a diploma or the equivalent.
  - -Adjust work schedules and/or provide scholarship assistance for employees going back to school.

SOURCE: Adapted from "Business Promise," Houston, TX. 1993.

VI-14. Lessons of Successful Programs

If successful programs are to be widely implemented, we must:

- Know what works.
- Prove that successful programs are affordable.
- Attract and train enough skilled and committed personnel.
- Resist the lure of replication through dilution.
- Gentle the heavy hand of bureaucracy.
- Devise a variety of replication strategies.

SOURCE: Schorr, *L. Within Our Reach: Breaking: The Cycle of Disadvantage*. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1988.

VI-15. Why Service Learning?

"Today it is possible for America's teenagers to finish high school yet never be asked to participate responsibly in life in or out of school; never be encouraged to spend time with older people, who may be lonely; never be asked to help a child who has not learned to read, to clean up the litter on the street, or even to do something meaningful at the school itself.
Ernest Boyer, Carnegie Foundation

Service learning benefits include:

- Increased competence, self-confidence, and self-esteem.
- Experience among people of diverse backgrounds.
- Increased empathy for others.
- A chance to learn in a different way: from doing rather than from being told.
- Experience in problem solving.
- Increased sense of the responsibilities of life as well as enjoying its privileges.
- Tangible public benefits.

SOURCE: Kinsley, C. W. "Creating New Structures—Community Service Learning," *Community Education Journal*, XVIII, 1 (Fall 1990).

VI-16. Successful Community Service Programs

Successful community service programs have the following characteristics:

- They are an integral part of the educational program—not an add-on.
- They have structures that give students feed back from faculty and community sponsors.
- They include a planned method for examining service experiences in relations to changes in skills, knowledge, and attitudes.
- They give students genuine responsibility in which there are consequences contingent on their performance.
- They structure contact between schools and community agencies to assure meeting mutual goals.
- They involve systematic monitoring—evaluation of student and client activities so that service experiences can be important.

SOURCE: National Youth Leadership Council. *Growing Hope: A Sourcebook on Integrating Youth Service into the School Curriculum.* St. Paul, MN: Center for Youth Development and Research, University of Minnesota, 1989.

Suggested Group Activity

- A Chamber of Commerce committee has been formed to promote the development of partnerships with the schools in your district. The committee has asked you for suggestions on how they might begin to get some successful partnerships formed. Prepare a short briefing paper containing your recommendations.

- In small groups, discuss the differences between cooperation, coordination, and collaboration. From your discussion, develop:
  -A written interagency agreement based on cooperation.

-A written interagency agreement based on coordination.
-A written interagency agreement based on collaboration.

Compare your continuum of agreements with those of other groups.

RECOMMENDED READING

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UNIT VII

TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION: LISTENING AND TELLING

The terms "school-community relations" and "public relations" should not be used interchangeably. School-community relations encompasses all of the interaction and communication that goes on between schools and their communities, while public relations refers to the schools' deliberate efforts to influence community opinion and win community support. Both involve *communication.*

The basic purpose of most communication is to build understanding, although that purpose is not always accomplished, no matter how strenuous or sincere the effort. George Bernard Shaw once observed, "The greatest problem of communication is the illusion that it has been accomplished." That is why good listening skills and feedback are so essential—and so useful—to the communicator.

It is always a good idea to try to communicate directly with an intended audience. When that is not possible, school administrators may have to use key communicators or the media to reach external publics—that is, those who are not directly involved with the schools.

Communication has five components:

1. The *source*: someone with an idea to communicate.
2. The *message* (structure and contents): the expression of the idea in words, gestures, and symbols.
3. The message is expressed through a *channel:* seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting. Selecting the right channel or combination of channels is important to getting the message through to the intended receiver.
4. The *receiver:* the person(s) to whom the message is directed. Considering the receiver's characteristics is crucial as the source develops the idea into a message and chooses a channel to express it, because the message may encounter internal and external obstacles to being received and understood.
5. The message causes some type of *effect*: an indication that the receiver did or did not understand it.

INSTRUCTIONAL OUTLINES

Following are instructional outlines and group activities that could be used by trainers in a variety of settings or by students in group discussions or study sessions.

VII-1. The Major Barriers to Communication

- Filters—opinions, concerns, or values that affect the way the message is received.
- Information overload—lack of time to read, absorb, discuss, or comprehend.
- Jargon—specialized terms, acronyms, and unfamiliar expressions.
- Semantics—words may mean or imply different things to different people.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993.

VII-2. Listening with Three Ears

Communication involves listening as well as speaking.

A good leader listens with three ears:

- With one ear, a good leader listens to what people *are* saying. (This is relatively easy.)
- With a second ear, a good leader listens to what people *are not* saying. (This is more difficult.)
- With the third ear, a good leader listens to what people *want to say but don't know how to.* (This is the most difficult.)

SOURCE: Adapted from Mecom, M. and Mecom, T. "Seeking, Succeeding—and Listening," *Sky Magazine*, October 1985; provided by Ed Brown, Georgia Southern University, September 1993.

VII-3. Listening: Some Observations

- Listening is not the same as hearing.
- Successful oral communication depends as much on the listener as the speaker.
- Concentration in listening is difficult because of the differential in speed between thinking and speaking.
- It has been said that people are the only creatures that can *talk* themselves into trouble. (Does that mean it is possible to *listen* one's way out?)
- What the listener perceives is being said is as important as what is actually said.
- Arthur Combs said, "A fact is not what is; a fact for any person is what he believes is so."
- J. C. Penney said, "The occupational disease of the poor executive is in his inability to listen."

SOURCE: Provided by Ed Brown, Georgia Southern University, September 1993.

VII-4. Listening to Others

- STOP TALKING. You can't listen while you are talking.
- EMPATHIZE WITH THE OTHER PERSON. Try to put yourself in his/her place so that you can see what he/she is trying to get at.
- ASK QUESTIONS when you don't understand, when you need further clarification, or when you want to show you are listening. But don't ask questions that will embarrass or "show up" the other person.
- DON'T GIVE UP TOO SOON. Don't interrupt the other person: give him/her time to say what he/she has to say.
- CONCENTRATE ON WHAT IS BEING SAID. Actively focus your attention on the words, ideas, and feelings related to the subject.
- SMILE APPROPRIATELY, but don't overdo it.
- LEAVE YOUR EMOTIONS BEHIND (if you can). Try to push your worries, fears, and problems outside the room. They may prevent you from listening well.
- CONTROL YOUR ANGER. Try not to get angry at what is being said; your anger may prevent you from understanding the words or meaning.

- GET RID OF DISTRACTIONS. Put down any papers, pencils, etc., you have in your hands; they may distract you.
- GET THE MAIN POINTS. Concentrate on the main ideas; examples, stories, statistics, etc., are important, but are usually not the main points. Examine them only to see if they prove, support, or define the main ideas.
- SHARE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION. Only part of the responsibility rests with the speaker. You, as listener, have an important part. Try to understand and, if you don't, ask for clarification.
- REACT TO IDEAS, NOT TO THE PERSON. Don't let your reactions to the person influence your interpretation of what he/she says. The ideas may be good even if you don't like the person or the way he/she talks.
- DON'T ARGUE MENTALLY. When you are trying to understand the other person, don't argue mentally as he/she is speaking. It sets up a barrier between you and the speaker.
- USE THE DIFFERENCE IN RATE. You can listen faster than a person can talk, so use this rate difference to your advantage by: trying to stay on the right track; anticipating what is going to be said; thinking back over what has been said; evaluating the development; etc. (Rate difference: speech rate is 100 to 150 words per minute; thinking rate is 250 to 500.)
- LISTEN FOR WHAT IS NOT SAID. Sometimes you can learn just as much by determining what the other person leaves out or avoids as you can by listening to what is said.
- LISTEN TO THE WAY SOMETHING IS SAID. Don't concentrate so hard on what is being said that you miss the emotion of what is said. The speaker's attitudes and emotional reactions may be more important than the words.
- LEARN TO TOLERATE SILENCE. In conversation, silence often has the effect of putting the ball in the other person's court and letting him/her start. We tend to fear silence or are embarrassed by it, so we either chatter or encourage others to chatter.
- DON'T ANTAGONIZE THE SPEAKER. You may cause the other person to conceal ideas, emotions, or attitudes by antagonizing him/her in any number of ways: arguing, criticizing, taking notes, not taking notes, asking questions, not asking questions, etc. Try to be aware of the effect you are having on the other person; adapt to the speaker.
- LISTEN FOR PERSONALITY. One of the best ways of getting information about a person is to listen to him/her talk. As he/she talks, you can begin to find out likes and dislikes, motivations, value system, thoughts on various subjects, and what makes the person tick.
- AVOID MAKING ASSUMPTIONS. Assumptions can get you into trouble. Don't assume that people use words the same way you do; don't say what they mean (but you understand what they mean); distort the truth because what was said doesn't agree with what you think; lie because they interpreted the facts differently from the way you have; are unethical because they are trying to win you over to their point of view; are angry because they are enthusiastic in presenting views. Assumptions like these may turn out to be true, but more often they just get in the way of your understanding and reaching agreement or compromise.
- AVOID CLASSIFYING THE SPEAKER. It may have some value, but beware. Too frequently we classify a person as one type and then try to fit everything he/she says into what

makes sense coming from that type of person. At times, it helps us to understand people if we know their politics, their religious beliefs, their jobs, etc., but people are unpredictable and do not fit easily into classifications.

SOURCE: Provided by Ed Brown, Georgia Southern University, September 1993.

VII-5. LISTENING I.Q. TEST

How good a listener are you? Take the following 20-question test and find out.

1. Do you go into a listening situation prepared to change your attitude or opinions in response to valid comments or suggestions? YES OR NO
2. Do you go into a listening situation prepared to take an action in response to what you hear, when such action appears justified? YES OR NO
3. Do you concentrate while you are listening and attempt to understand not only what is being said but also what lies behind the speaker's words—what he/she can't say or finds hard to say? YES OR NO
4. Do you show that you are paying attention to what is being said without doodling, reading, making phone calls, and so on? YES OR NO
5. While listening, do you keep in mind that you are probably listening not merely to one person but also to others,—perhaps many others—who share that person's views? YES OR NO
6. Do you understand, in listening, that opinions are *facts* for the speaker and that this conviction must be considered in formulating a response? YES OR NO
7. Are you able to hear someone out to the end of what he/she has to say? YES OR NO
8. In listening, can you withhold any counter argument or display of disapproval that would terminate the speaker prematurely? YES OR NO
9. Can you mentally summarize what has been said by another person to be sure you understood it? YES OR NO
10. Do you, by word or gesture, encourage the listener to go on to make sure you get the whole story? YES OR NO
11. Do you examine the evidence a speaker offers, with the aim of making sure it supports any contention? YES OR NO
12. Can you hold your temper while listening to criticism of a policy, program, or attitude in which you had a hand? YES OR NO
13. Can you empathize with a speaker, no matter who it is, by seeing the subject from his/her point of view? YES OR NO
14. Are you genuinely interested in hearing what others have to say about the organization and its problems and successes? YES OR NO
15. Do you accept emotion and sentiment in a speaker? YES OR NO
16. Do you listen to others, subordinates in particular, without regard to their appearance, background, education, training, speech characteristics, etc? YES OR NO

17. Do you strive to use listening to induce creativity and new ideas in the speaker? YES OR NO
18. Do you consciously avoid "tunnel listening"—that is, accepting only what you want to hear? YES OR NO
19. Do your subordinates come to you with *both* their problems and successes? YES OR NO
20. Are you able to keep silent while another is speaking? YES OR NO

If you answered "no" to ten or more questions, you need to work on your listening skills.

SOURCE: Provided by Ed Brown, Georgia Southern University, September 1993.

Suggested Group Activity

Send 4-5 members of the group out of the room so they cannot overhear what is being said. Have the remainder of the group make up a short message that contains a sense of urgency, a number or statistic, and several specific actions to be taken.

For example:

> There is a small fire in the chem lab. Please go to the main office and call 911 for the fire department and sound the fire alarm. Then get a wheelchair and take it to room B-17, the special education classroom.

Call one person back into the room and have someone communicate the message. Then ask the person who received the message to call another person back into the room and repeat the message. Continue until the last person has been called back into the room, received the message, and repeated it to the rest of the group. Have the group discuss any changes in the original message, and when and how they occurred.

VII-6. Key Communicators

Key communicators are supportive people—internal and external—who are kept well informed about your school. Their job is two-fold:

- To quickly spread accurate and supportive information to other members of the community.
- To be listening posts in the school and community, alerting the school administrator to rumors and concerns.

Almost anyone can be a key communicator, but the people selected should represent a cross section of the community and have two traits:

- Be respected and listened to in his or her circle of contacts, regardless of the size of the circle.
- Be supportive of the school and its successful operation, especially during times of stress.

The following tips will help you establish and maintain good communications with your key communicators:

- Identify people who share opinions with others about your school. They might be business people, volunteers, bus drivers, crossing guards, substitutes, parents, former students, former students' parents, etc.

- Personally call each individual and invite him or her to become a key communicator. Invite them all to come to *one* meeting, stressing that there will not be additional meetings. Briefly explain the key communicator concept. Assure them that you are aware of their interest in the school and that you would like them to be key communicators to receive and share information—to be two-way communicators.
- Distribute envelopes containing informational items. Contents could consist of a school newsletter, a pertinent staff bulletin or two, a calendar with schedules (including testing schedule, if possible), etc.
- Ask these key communicators to call you. Explain your need to know if something is occurring that affects the students or school, or if something has been said that sounds like a rumor. Promise that you, in turn, will keep them informed.
- Keep a supply of envelopes addressed to your key communicators. If an incident warrants, a simple letter of explanation to these people before the story reaches the newspapers or is exaggerated by the rumor mill will pay great dividends in credibility. Also, set up a telephone chain for quicker response if the need arises.
- Be ready for one or more of the following to occur. Additional people will call and ask to be one of your key communicators; the credibility of your school information will increase; an information call from a key communicator will provide a key to solving a problem.
- At the end of the year, invite the key communicators to school. Thank them for their support. Consider giving them a certificate, small gift, or admission ticket to a school event.

SOURCE: Adapted from National School Public Relations Association. *Principals' Survival Packet*, Arlington, VA, 1984.

VII-7. Intent of Communication

- MASS (TO INFORM): Newsletters, brochures, news releases.
- INTERPERSONAL (TO CHANGE ATTITUDES): Dialogues, workshops, telephone

SOURCE: National School Public Relations Association, *Learn from the Winners...School PR Programs that Work*. Arlington, VA, 1983.

VII-8. Communicating Meaning

- Be eloquent.
- Use standards as a measuring stick.
- Use startling facts.
- Use a numbered list.
- Use comparisons and contrasts.
- Conceptualize and describe the big picture.
- Be in touch with the issues and understand their meaning.
- Show benefits.
- Reframe the issue.
- Use debate techniques.
- Put matters in context.
- Show connections.
- Point out conflict.
- Be a creative thinker.

SOURCE: Gary Marx, Senior Associate Executive Director, American Association of School Administrators, Lecture and Handout, Falls Church, VA, July 1993.

VII-9. Improving Written Communication: 10 Don'ts

- Don't write memos to the entire faculty complaining about a problem that only a few are causing. Talk directly to the offenders.
- Don't write a memo to a teacher about some minor problem. Talk to the teacher, describe the problem, listen, work out a solution together.
- Don't mail letters written in anger. Write an angry letter, put it aside for a few hours, then throw it away.
- Don't try to win the battle of words with representatives of the news media. If they seriously distort the facts, write a brief letter of correction. Remember, they always have the last word.
- Don't overemphasize noninstructional matters in your written communications. What you write about indicates what you care about; remember that your business is teaching and learning.
- Don't send out important letters, announcements, or bulletins that have not been read and reviewed by someone you trust. Even Hemingway needed a good editor.
- Don't overuse educational jargon with faculty members—and don't use it at all with parents. Jargon helps insiders communicate with each other, but it confuses and annoys the rest of the world.
- Don't put in writing something you may later wish could be taken back. Remember that the written word endures.
- Don't clutter teachers' mailboxes and minds with unnecessary communications.
- Don't substitute memo-writing for problem solving. Remember Glatthorn's law: The number of memos written is in inverse proportion to the number of problems solved.

SOURCE: Glatthorn, A. *Writing in the School: Improvement through Effective Leadership.* Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1981.

VII-10. Improving Your Publications

- Design should tell the reader at a glance what the publication is about.
- Typography should be planned to make the publication easy to read.
- Keep in mind the 30-3-30 principle: offer a reader something to spend 30 seconds, three minutes, or 30 minutes on.
- Graphics and art should enhance the printed work. This includes quality printing, paper stock, ink, etc.
- Pictures should be large, clear, well-cropped, and show action. Consider outlining each picture.
- A serif typeface of 9, 10, or 11 point is usually recommended for body copy. Line width should not exceed 52 characters.
- Headlines should use action words. Consider using caps and lower case and sans-serif type.
- Writing style should be suitable to the audience for which the publication is targeted.
- The lead should bring the reader into the copy.
- Newsletter articles should be written in inverted pyramid format, with key points in the first paragraph.

- Material should be written for the information needs and interests of the audience for whom the publication is designed.
- Copy, photos, and graphics should reflect the composition of the student body and staff.

SOURCE: National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) criteria for judging entries in annual publications contest, 1992.

VII-11. School Publications

Publications should be designed to help school district consumers get answers to basic questions. They can be divided into categories according to the public addressed and the purpose for which each publication was created.

Internal Public	External Public
Co-Workers	Total Community
• Staff newsletter	• District newsletter
• Staff handbook	• Annual report
• Administrative regulations	• Budget brochure
• Board policy book	• Community education news
Students	"Focus" Publics (target groups)
• Program of studies	• Brochures
• Discipline code	• Pamphlets
• Student information guide	• Information packets
• Student newsletter	• Newsletters
Parents	
• Building-level newsletter	
• District newsletter	
• Parent information guide	
• Parent handbook	

SOURCE: Pennsylvania School Boards Association, *Schools-Community: Guidelines for Effective Communication*, Harrisburg, PA, 1986.

VII-12. Newsletter Tips

Newsletters should be:

- Attractive, appropriate, brief.
- Easy to read, requiring little time or effort.
- Published regularly, frequently, on schedule.
- Fresh, timely, informative, entertaining.
- Important and convey the spirit and tone of the agency or organization.

Newsletters should *not* be:

- Produced to meet deadlines.
- Intended to compliment and flatter the management.
- Apologetic for organizational errors.
- Published to please "the boss."
- Filled with amateur art.
- Filled with gossip.

• Designed in a crowded format with small photos and small type.

SOURCE: Pennsylvania School Boards Association. *Schools-Community: Guidelines for Effective Communication*, Harrisburg, PA , 1986.

VII-13. Public Relations Glossary

- News Release — the most common of public relations tools. The news release or press release is a document that includes all the facts (who, what, where, why, when, and how) about an event, program or happening that a publication or broadcast station needs to cover a story. A news release is factual, not promotional, and concise (generally only one or two pages).
- Backgrounders — basic information written to provide background as an aid to reporters and editors. The backgrounder should answer any questions that the news release does not, for example, the number of students, etc.
- PSAs — Public service announcements are newsprint or broadcast announcements that are printed or aired free for nonprofit organizations. Radio PSAs, short written announcements with no sound effects or music, are usually read on the air by station personnel.
- Angle — the "news hook" that determines the context of the message. The angle is the approach taken to grab the readers' or viewers' attention; it is usually introduced in the first paragraph, or lead, of the story. The story is then more fully developed.
- Exclusive News Release — a release that is sent to only one publication. Publications like exclusivity and for major announcements this can increase the chances of a major story appearing in the publication. If you are sending out an exclusive, be sure to let the editor know by noting it immediately below the release information as follows:
  FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE EXCLUSIVE TO THE DAILY CHRONICLE
- Photo Opportunity — An event that lends itself well to a news photograph. It could be a ribbon-cutting ceremony or an event (such as a Computer Learning Night) that does not necessarily require a full-fledged news story.
- Kinds of Stories
  -Exclusive — Focus on particular subject/event by one publisher or broadcast unit.
  -Reactive — The local response to something in the news, such as a story about how test scores are declining across the nation.
  -Roundup — Comments from various sources, usually experts, about a subject.

SOURCE: Computer Learning Foundation. *Community Relations Kit: A Complete Guide for Schools*, Palo Alto, CA, 1990.

VII-14. Preparing a News Release

Keep in mind the following important guidelines when researching and writing a news release:

- Make sure your subject is newsworthy.
- Make sure the release will advance your objective.
- Summarize the entire story in the first paragraph. Or, if it is a feature, make sure that the first paragraph will capture and hold the reader's attention.

- Include all important information—who, what, when, where, why, how.
- Use short sentences and short words. Say exactly what you mean. Avoid jargon and value judgments.
- Use non-sexist language.
- Be accurate; double check your facts.
- Spell out the name of an organization or program followed by the abbreviation the first time it appears Afterwards, use the abbreviation only: Comprehensive Educational Process (CEP). Identify people by their titles: not Mr. Gray, but Thomas Gray, Volunteer Coordinator at Central High School.
- Include a contact person and phone number and the date the news is to be released.
- Edit carefully and mercilessly. Good stories are often not written, but rewritten. Expect the reporter or editor to rewrite, too.
- Proofread, then proofread again. Remember, computer programs don't do it all.
- Send a neatly typed, double-spaced original and a good copy. Keep a copy for your files.
- Release it only after you have obtained all necessary approval.

SOURCE: Adapted from Aronson, M. and Spetner, D. *The Public Relations Writers Handbook*. New York, NY: Lexington Books, 1993.

Suggested Group Activity

A new school year provides an opportunity to create a positive climate for the total school program as well as for a specific curricular area.

- As the principal, write a one-page news release for the local paper, focusing on a special project or activity to improve school-community relations.
- As a teacher, write a one-page letter to your students' parents (guardians) informing them about your class expectations and your planned home-school involvement activities.

VII-15. Guidelines for Good Press Relations

- Meet with news media representatives. Call to determine who the key people are, including: the news editor or news director, public service director, education editor, sports editor, and so on. Have coffee or lunch with them and find out how you can best meet their informational needs.
- Develop attractive news release and public service forms to carry information on a regular basis to your press list, public service list, sports list, etc.
- Be aware of deadlines. A story is of little use if you've missed the deadline and it has become old news. Weekly papers have fixed deadlines, as do dailies. Radio can take a story almost any time the newsroom is operating. Television is also becoming more of an instant medium, but film and tape require time for processing and editing.
- If news media personnel can't personally cover a story, offer to drop your notes off at the newspaper offices, or provide a telephone report for radio stations.
- When a reporter calls, respond promptly. If you will be out, be sure to establish a system for handling media inquiries.

- IF A REPORTER CALLS, DON'T TRANSFER HIM OR HER TO A LONG-SHOT POSSIBILITY for an answer. Let the reporter know who actually has the needed information or obtain it and pass it along yourself.
- DON'T BE DEFENSIVE. Defensiveness is often taken as a sign of guilt. If you can answer a reporter's question, do so honestly.
- KEEP IN MIND THAT ALL REPORTS AND SURVEYS ARE PUBLIC PROPERTY. You must provide this type of data to the news media if it is requested. Rough drafts, working papers, and preliminary figures are not necessarily included.
- IF YOU DON'T HAVE THE ANSWER, it's okay to say, "I don't know for sure, but I'll call you back in 10 minutes."
- A REPORTER MAY OFTEN WANT TO DO AN ADVANCE STORY. An advance may actually mean greater interest when the program is fully developed.
- NOTHING IS EVER "OFF THE RECORD." While you may ask a reporter not to print or broadcast certain information, he or she may proceed to obtain the same information from another source. This does not mean that reporters should not be briefed and taken into your confidence. Most will respect your desire to place a hold on a story temporarily.
- HOLD FEW NEWS CONFERENCES AND ONLY WHEN WARRANTED. Before opening the news conference for questions, get to know the reporters present, introduce those who are featured in the conference and make a short introductory statement containing the essence of what you want people to remember.
- SET UP A GOOD INTERNAL REPORTING SYSTEM. A good backlog of story possibilities may be just what a reporter needs on a slow news day.
- ESTABLISH A COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY GROUP including news media representatives to advise you on the handling of various problems involving communication.
- WHEN HAVING A PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH A REPORTER, visit for awhile. Express your point of view and what you would like people to understand.
- AFTER AN INTERVIEW, INFORM THOSE WHO NEED TO KNOW ABOUT IT. This approach avoids sending out conflicting information.
- AND IF A REPORTER HAS DONE WHAT YOU CONSIDER A GOOD JOB, don't forget to say *thank you*!

SOURCE: Gary Marx, Senior Associate Executive Director, American Association of School Administrators. Lecture and handout. Falls Church, VA, July 1993.

VII-16. MEDIA RELATIONS: NOT EASY

ADMINISTRATOR COMPLAINS:

- Why does the press always sensationalize things?
- The papers never get things right.
- Reporters take things out of context.
- You can't trust reporters.
- I didn't say that at all.
- Why do reporters enjoy stirring up trouble?

NEWSPERSON COUNTER-COMPLAINS:

- That organization will never come clean.
- They won't give us the real news, only a lot of trite stuff.
- They won't let you in to see the person with the news.
- What are they trying to hide?
- They color events and check the free flow of legitimate news.
- They always try space grabbing for free advertising.
- There is gross ignorance of the media's editorial requirements; they have no conception of what is news or how it should be written.

WHAT AN EDUCATIONAL LEADER WANTS FROM REPORTERS:

- Tell the whole story about what we're doing.
- Provide recognition for children.
- Provide recognition for those who serve children.
- Help us garner the resources necessary to provide the level of education mandated by a society that is highly stratified, complex, technological, and integrated with a global economy.
- Forgive us for taking risks from time to time.

HOW A REPORTER READS THE PRECEDING LIST:

- Devote more attention to education.
- Report all the "good" news.
- Promote all budget requests.
- Ignore all the "bad" news.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993. (Original source unknown.)

VII-17. RULES FOR GOOD PRESS RELATIONS

- BE A SQUARE SHOOTER (accuracy—integrity—performance). Don't favor one news outlet over another.
- GIVE SERVICE. Provide interesting, timely stories and pictures in a form and at a time in which the press can use them.
- DON'T BEG OR CARP. Advertising belongs in the advertising department. Know the difference between advertising and news—news people do!
- DON'T ASK TO HAVE A STORY KILLED. The way to keep unfavorable stories out of the press is to prevent situations that produce such stories. Bad news never improves with age.
- AVOID TALKING "OFF THE RECORD." If you don't want a statement quoted, don't make it.
- DON'T FLOOD THE MEDIA with your "news."
- KEEP YOUR LISTS UP-TO-DATE.
- REMEMBER THAT A GOOD PRESS RELATIONSHIP MUST BE EARNED.

SOURCE: Cutlip, S. M. and Center, A. H. *Effective Public Relations*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1982.

VII-18. Rules for Dealing with Media Issues

- KNOW YOUR MEDIA. Think and act like a reporter.
  - -WHAT media are available? TV, cable, newspaper, magazines, community supplements, public service programs, etc.
  - -WHO is most likely to cover your beat or events? Target that person—and his/her editors.
  - -WHERE does your reporter work? Keep a record of contacts.
  - -WHY should a reporter cover this event or story? Offer interesting angles, interviews, or TV picture possibilities.
  - -WHEN is the best time to contact your media representative and the best time to hold an event for maximum coverage? Deadlines matter to reporters.
  - -HOW should an event be covered? Don't try to make editorial decisions for reporters, but do try to determine which media would have the most interest in your story.
- KNOW HOW YOU WILL RESPOND BEFORE A CRISIS HAPPENS. Damage control is the hardest part of media relations. Have an action plan and designated spokespersons (administrators, teachers and students) selected beforehand.
- KNOW YOU ARE IN CHARGE. You can control media access to school property, administrators, faculty, and students— BUT—
- KNOW THE LAW. All educational personnel—parents, kids, teachers, administrators—can be available to media off school grounds.
- KNOW YOUR EXPECTATIONS. Feel free to reiterate them to reporters and select events and news conferences that will further your goals—BUT—
- KNOW YOUR LIMITATIONS. You can't write a reporter's story—or determine all the pictures or interviews that will be used. Do offer factual written accounts of events, complete with correct spellings and titles of participants.
- KNOW THAT REPORTERS ARE HUMAN BEINGS. They're trying to do a job, just as you are. Treat them the way you want to be treated—not as enemies, but not as close friends either. Most reporters will accept "I don't know" or "Can I get back to you?" (and occasionally "No comment")— but don't lie; it will be remembered—if not this time, then down the road.
- KNOW SOMETHING WILL GO WRONG (or at least won't go exactly the way you want). You can only do your best and hope others do theirs. Be flexible and ask that reporters be the same. Homework does make a difference on both sides.
- KNOW YOU DO HAVE A RECOURSE—if stories are factually incorrect. Most media are willing to correct large errors, but get to them quickly—during the same newscast or that same day, if possible.
- KNOW WHEN TO KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT. Each reporter is different and has different standards about what to use—and what to keep in confidence. You will learn how much information you can give off the record—and to whom.
- KNOW WHAT NEWS IS. News is not public relations. It should not be one-sided. It is sometimes painful and negative, but it doesn't always have to be.

SOURCE: Adapted from Pennsylvania School Boards Association. *School-Community: Guidelines for Effective Communication.* New Cumberland, PA, 1986.

VII-19. Working with the Media: Ground Rules

- Rule Number one for All Occasions: Whatever you say, be sure it's true. Don't even think about obscuring the facts or saying things that are untrue.
- Know your audience and address it. Organize your presentation a bit differently for a PTA meeting, a Chamber of Commerce luncheon, school assembly, or responding to reporters' questions.
- Remember that brevity is a virtue. Since reporters are generally limited either by time or space, compose your comments in easy to understand, colorful segments. Beware of the temptation to make the same point over and over again.
- Avoid education jargon. Jargon is a kind of shorthand that people use to communicate within a profession or occupation. If your audience isn't likely to understand a term, either don't use it or offer a brief, uncomplicated explanation.
- Stick to the story. If a reporter is visiting with you about a bond issue, site-based management, test scores in math, etc., avoid drifting into other subjects.
- Don't blame reporters for things they can't control. A reporter generally has little or no control over:
  - -Whether the story is actually used.
  - -How the story is positioned and presented in relation to other stories.
  - -The length of a story, either in print space or air time.
  - -What is cut from the story to make it fit the required time and space.
  - -The headline.
- Know what is public information. Reports and surveys financed with public dollars are public documents. A reporter can legitimately ask to see any such reports, and schools are required to provide them. Anything said at a public meeting, by any participant, can be publicly reported.
- Give one person full responsibility for media relations. Each school and school system should identify one person who will be the media liaison. The media relations director for a school system should :
  - -Work directly with the superintendent.
  - -Hold a position on the school system's cabinet and be involved in and informed about the details of all programs and important decisions.
  - -Have the authority to speak for the school system on any issue that might arise and to call on others for their knowledge and expertise in various topics.
  - -Not be chastised for reporting facts. (Too often, organizations shoot messengers instead of solving problems.)
- Remember, humans err. Educators make mistakes. So do reporters. If an error appears in a story, resist the temptation to explode. The reporter may simply have misunderstood something you said. Keep in mind that good reporters base their livelihoods on their credibility. If they lose it, they are out of business.
- Return calls promptly. When reporters call, chances are they are working on a story for the next newspaper or newscast. Often, they must complete their stories within one or two days. Move a reporter's message to the top of your stack.
- Know what "off-the-record" means. Always assume that any conversation with a reporter is on-the-record and might be published. Reporters work on that assumption;

so should you. On occasion, if you have a working relationship with a reporter and want to share unquotable information or background, you can ask to go "off-the-record" for a minute. If the reporter agrees—and in most cases he or she will—you can speak without worry of being quoted.

- THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK. Try to select words that will most precisely carry your ideas. If necessary, pause for a few seconds to form your answer. Always speak to those who may not have enough information to understand, and do so in plain language.
- REMEMBER THAT "I DON'T KNOW" IS NOT A GUILTY PLEA. If you don't know the answer to a question, don't try to make up something that could be inaccurate.
- REMEMBER THAT "NO COMMENT" IS A COMMENT. In reality, these two words imply that the speaker has something to hide or is being condescending. Most reporters will assume that both are true. Simply say that you can't answer the question and why: e.g., "That's a personnel issue involving a school employee, and a public statement would not be appropriate."
- BE FAIR TO ALL MEDIA. You can go a long way toward building and maintaining credibility by adopting a policy of scrupulous fairness:
  - -Distribute even the most routine news releases to all media outlets at the same time.
  - -Don't time your news releases, even inadvertently, to give one news organization an advantage.
  - -If you invite one news organization to cover an event, invite them all.
  - -If you expect both broadcast and print coverage at an event or news conference, allow adequate time.
- LOOK FOR NEWS PEGS. Know what aspect of a potential story will grab the reader's attention. Generally, some aspect of every story makes it topical or ties it to a community or worldwide concern. Schools are in an excellent position to work with various reporters on many beats—the entertainment reporter (school musical, dances, student art shows), business reporter (economics class), or environmental reporter (science projects)—and others might find special interest in various school activities. However, if a newsroom has assigned a specific person to cover education, make this reporter your first contact.
- BE SENSITIVE TO DEADLINES. Reporters are busiest each day during the two hours immediately preceding their deadlines. That's not generally a good time to call and chat unless you have information needed to complete the story.
- SET UP A GOOD INTERNAL REPORTING SYSTEM. Many school systems distribute reporting forms to staff inviting them to submit possible story ideas. It's also a good idea to appoint a person in each school building to spot potential news stories. Every school district will benefit from helping staff develop a "nose for news."
- NEVER ASK A REPORTER TO SHOW YOU A STORY BEFORE IT IS PUBLISHED. The news media are free and independent, and this type of review would likely be seen as an attempt to cleanse or censor a story before it is published or aired.

SOURCE: Ordovensky, P. and Marx, G. *Working with the News Media.* Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators, 1993.

VII-20. Upgrading Your Public Relations Skills: A Quiz for Principals

How good are your public relations skills? Take the following 14-question PR test and find out.

1.	Do you encourage teachers to send home notes commending children for their accomplishments?	YES OR NO
2.	Do you frequently remind your staff to take five minutes at the close of the school day to review information covered during the day?	YES OR NO
3.	Do you encourage teachers at least once a month to give you information that can be the source of a news story for the local press?	YES OR NO
4.	In the last month, has your school hosted a mini-tour for senior citizens, service club members, parents who are not PTA officers, parochial school representatives, or others?	YES OR NO
5.	During this school year, have you encouraged your teachers to suggest a program involving students and themselves and to present it at a service club meeting or other community event?	YES OR NO
6.	Do you give disgruntled parents a chance to "sound off," especially if they are angry or upset?	YES OR NO
7.	Do you encourage teachers and PTA members to write to their legislators about proposed legislation or current issues in education?	YES OR NO
8.	Have you invited parents to form an organized group that could help provide protection against vandalism or violence?	YES OR NO
9.	Does your school have a "buddy" system, in which students help newcomers feel more at ease in their new surroundings?	YES OR NO
10.	Do you have a bulletin board in a central hallway where newspaper/magazine articles about your school, staff, and students (former and present) are displayed?	YES OR NO
11.	Do you occasionally schedule a visit to the home of a child who has been having unusual difficulty?	YES OR NO
12.	At least once a year, do you have a full staff meeting involving all school personnel—teachers, custodians, food services employees, office staff, etc.?	YES OR NO
13.	Is your office neat and uncluttered?	YES OR NO
14.	Do you encourage teachers to participate in community activities and professional development programs?	YES OR NO

How to score: If you answered "yes" to 12 or more questions, you're terrific; 9-11, you need a little oomph; and 8 or less, you need immediate help.

SOURCE: Questions from *Positive Public Relations for Principals—A Book of Lists*, containing hundreds of suggestions on how to improve public relations, 1990; available from Educational Communication Center, P.O. Box 657, Camp Hill, PA 17011).

VII-21. Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences can be beneficial or harmful to both the parent and the teacher, and either way ultimately the student may be affected. Many parents come to school for a parent-teacher conference with only their experiences as a student, good or bad, as preparation for the conference; other parents come with professional degrees, are teachers themselves, or have older children or other school experiences that reduces their apprehension. Parents are likely to have the same apprehensions and beliefs regardless of their experiences and education, "the teacher knows all" or " the teacher doesn't really know my child," or "the teacher is in control."

Teachers are likely to treat all parents in the same manner, using the same props—agenda, grade book, student folders, attendance records, etc., all of which can be intimidating to parents. Teachers will typically sit behind a desk (a physical and psychological barrier to effective communication with the parents), take out their grade book (another potential barrier) and focus on grades or attendance rather than the child as a whole and an assessment of the total school experience. This approach often puts the parents on the defensive and the teacher in a reactive mode.

The following do's and don'ts may make the parent-teacher conference a positive experience for everyone.

Do:

- Replace the "Warning-all visitors must report to the office" sign (usually the first thing you see when you walk into a school) with a "Welcome to [name] School, please come to the office for assistance;" have signs in bi-lingual format if your school has a significant minority population.
- Arrange an informal seating arrangement with no barriers (desk, table etc.).
- Have student grades, work, attendance records available, but pick a positive behavior attribute of the student to open the discussion.
- Review student files for family background information and attempt to relate to the parents or primary care-givers from a familiar referrant.
- Schedule flexible conference times to accommodate working parents.
- Have options available to parents who cannot schedule a conference during assigned times, i.e. weekends, early mornings, late evenings, during the day, home visits, or phone conferences.
- Give the parents or care-givers ample opportunity to discuss their concerns about the student or school programs.
- Avoid "killer phrases" when responding to a suggestion, i.e. a good idea, *but* it needs research; it's someone else's responsibility; we can't afford it; we need a committee on it; we've never done it that way before; it's not our problem; the school board/superintendent/principal/PTO will never allow it, etc
- Listen with an open mind and an attentive body posture; attempt to converse and not just concentrate on your agenda.
- Ask the parents or care-givers for their opinions and or advice; respect their contribution whether or not you agree.
- Have light refreshments available if at all possible and offer immediately.
- Extend an invitation to visit the classroom during the regular school day.

- Have a school handbook or written policies available;
- Provide for child care for preschool siblings.

DON'T:

- Allow interruptions, phone calls, other people, etc., during the conference.
- Stand while conferees are seated.
- Focus on papers, grade books, or other inanimate objects.
- Minimize or underestimate the interest or knowledge level of the parents or caregivers regarding the school and their child.
- Act in any way superior, aloof, or preoccupied.
- Watch the clock.
- Use educational jargon.
- Complain about parents, school administration, or students in general.
- Dress too formally or too informally.
- Let your values and biases dominate the tone of the conversation.

SOURCE: Provided by Donna Schoeny, Educational Consultant, Charlottesville, VA, 1993.

RECOMMENDED READING

Aronson, M. and Spetner, D. *The Public Relations Writers Handbook*. New York, NY: Lexington Books, 1993.

Computer Learning Foundation. *Community Relations Kit: A Complete Guide for Schools*. Palo Alto, CA, 1990.

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Ordovensky, P. and Marx, G. *Working with the News Media*. Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators, 1993.

Pennsylvania School Boards Association. *Schools-Community: Guidelines for Effective Communication*. New Cumberland, PA, 1986.

UNIT VIII

PLANNING AND EVALUATING A PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

Schools that have broad community support and successful community involvement programs almost always have well-planned and thoughtfully executed public relations programs. The success of a school system's community involvement effort is likely to depend directly on its ability to communicate with the *total* community, especially as the percentage of households with school-age children continues to decline. The system's public image is almost certain to affect the community's willingness to support it—a fact no sophisticated school administrator is likely to lose sight of.

In the past, a public relations program might have succeeded simply by telling the community that the schools were doing a good job. No more. Today, an increasingly skeptical public concerned with accountability is demanding accurate, credible, and detailed information from the schools it is asked to support.

Another relatively new challenge to school public relations programs is the growing tendency of our society to expect the schools to deal with very difficult social issues—child abuse, homosexuality, drug addiction, teen parenthood, the spread of AIDS, school violence and guns, etc. The challenge of responding to these issues is not made easier by the fact that there is little agreement on what the response should be.

It is important for schools to acknowledge the complexity and difficulty of dealing with these issues. Having clear—and realistic—goals will help make the process of evaluating the public relations program a worthwhile and constructive activity, rather than an exercise in frustration or meaningless self-congratulation.

INSTRUCTIONAL OUTLINES

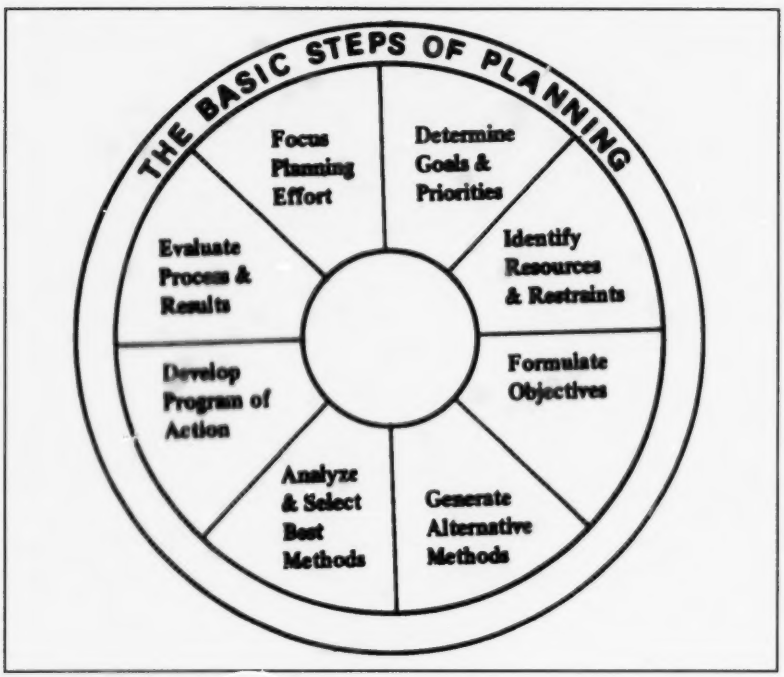
Following are instructional outlines and group activities that could be used by trainers in a variety of settings or by students in group discussions or study sessions.

VIII-1. PLANNING: THE BASIC STEPS

Planning is the continuous process of obtaining, organizing, and using information systematically to answer the following questions:

- What is the scope of the planning effort and who will be involved?
- What outcomes are desired?
- What resources will help the effort? What restraints will hinder it?
- What specific things must be achieved to reach the goals?
- In what ways may each specific thing be accomplished?
- Which way is best? Why?
- Who is going to implement that method? When?
- Did the effort succeed? If not, what changes are needed?

The following graphic presents the process as a cycle of steps.



The planning process involves these steps:

- FOCUS PLANNING EFFORT to ensure that planning is performed *with*, not *for,* people and that the following dimensions are understood:
  - -What is to be planned?
  - -What process will be used to plan?
  - -Who is to be involved in, or directly affected by, the planning effort?
  - -Is the planning effort for immediate or long-range purposes?
- DETERMINE GOALS AND PRIORITIES. Goals are the foundation of the entire planning process and are usually based on the results of a needs assessment process. Goals are broad, general statements of desired outcomes, but they should never be vague or fuzzy. Unless a goal is understood clearly by all the people involved, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to gain the support and commitment necessary for goal achievement. Objectives are more specific statements of desired outcomes related to achieving a goal.
- IDENTIFY RESOURCES AND RESTRAINTS. The next step is to analyze the setting and to determine, in a general sense, the major resources and restraints for each goal. Resources are those things that help, support, or have a positive impact on the achievement of a goal. Restraints are those things that hinder, inhibit, or have a negative impact on goal achievement.
- FORMULATE OBJECTIVES. Objectives are formulated by analyzing each goal statement and breaking it down into specific targets. Each objective should be clearly stated, so that everyone understands exactly what is to be accomplished. The objectives

are statements of the desired outcomes around which programs and activities are developed; clarity requires that the desired outcome be stated specifically, including who is to benefit and when the outcome is to be achieved.

- GENERATE ALTERNATIVE METHODS. There are different ways to do nearly anything. Given certain conditions, some ways are better than others. Generating alternative methods provides an opportunity for creativity. The purpose of this step is to identify as many ways as possible to achieve the stated objectives. Only after all the alternative methods have been listed for each objective should each be analyzed and criticized.
- ANALYZE AND SELECT BEST METHODS. Each alternative must be analyzed carefully. Some common criteria are cost, convenience, effectiveness, and feasibility. Only after the criteria have been established, their relative weight determined, and each alternative analyzed, should the selection of a method be made.
- DEVELOP PROGRAM OF ACTION. The program of action includes at least four major components: (1) goal statement; (2) objectives; (3) methods; and (4) activities. The program development procedures provide answers to the following questions:
  - -What are the major activities necessary to implement the methods selected?
  - -Who (specific names) will be responsible for performing each of the major activities?
  - -What are the starting and completion dates for each of the major activities?
  - -What are the basic resources (people, money, materials, facilities, etc.) needed to perform each major activity?
- EVALUATE PROCESS AND RESULTS. When procedures for evaluating both process and results are planned prior to the implementation of the program of action, useful information is available whenever it is needed. Process evaluation involves monitoring and reporting on the implementation procedures to determine whether methods and activities are being performed as designed. The procedures for carrying out the process evaluation should describe the methods for collecting, organizing, and reporting information about the progress of the program of action and should provide answers to the following questions:
  - -Who (specific names) will be responsible for (a) monitoring each major activity, and (b) reporting on the progress made?
  - -When (specific dates) will progress reports be made?
  - -Who (specific names) will be responsible for collecting the activity progress reports and for developing a program status report?
  - -When (specific dates) will the status reports be available?
  - -What will be the form of the activity progress reports and the program status reports?
  - -Who (specific names) will receive the program status reports?

  Results evaluation can also be performed by monitoring and reporting. The description of the procedures to be used for collecting, organizing, and reporting information regarding the outcomes of the program of action should answer the following questions:

-Who (specific names) will be responsible for collecting and reporting information on the achievement of the objectives of the program?
-What indicators will be used to determine the degree to which the objectives were achieved?
-Will the program of action be modified and continued or will it be phased out if the objectives are not achieved as stated?
-Who (specific names) will receive the reports on the results of the program of action?

- INFORMATION FROM THE EVALUATION OF BOTH PROCESS AND RESULTS SHOULD BE USED to improve the program, with the cycle beginning again in a continuous process.

SOURCE: Adapted from Young, K. *The Basic Steps of Planning*. Charlottesville, VA: Community Collaborators, 1978.

VIII-2. HOW TO DEVELOP A PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

IDENTIFY YOUR PUBLICS:

- Internal
- External
- Key communicators

DEVELOP AN INTERNAL PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM:

- Set priorities.
- Provide leadership.
- Involve staff.
- Provide training.
- Recognize achievement.
- Assign responsibilities.
- Put everything in writing.

ANALYZE EXISTING PUBLIC IMAGE:

- Be realistic.
- Talk to staff.
- Talk to key communicators—internal and external.
- Conduct formal or informal surveys.
- Monitor news and editorials.
- Listen to public questions and concerns.

DEVELOP A PUBLIC RELATIONS PHILOSOPHY, MISSION STATEMENT, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES:

- Determine mission statement.
- Assess capabilities.
- Set goals and objectives.
- Be sure goals and objectives are attainable.
- Be sure goals and objectives are measurable.
- Put mission statement, goals, and objectives in writing.
- Distribute to staff.
- Distribute to school board.

DEVELOP A STRATEGY:

- Work through staff committees.
- Develop a timeline.
- Review other programs.
- Plan, plan, plan.
- Put the plan in writing.

PUT THE PLAN IN MOTION:

- Delegate responsibilities.
- Inform staff.
- Be enthusiastic.
- Monitor progress.
- Adjust when indicated.

EVALUATE RESULTS:

- Determine if you were on target.
- Determine if goals were met.
- Review successes.
- Review failures.

REESTABLISH GOALS:

- Survey your publics.
- Make necessary changes.
- Reaffirm commitment.
- Keep going.

SOURCE: Decker, L. E. Class handout. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1993.

VIII-3. SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLANNING GUIDE

The purpose of the following guide is to help educators develop components of a comprehensive school-community public relations action plan for specific educational settings. The steps in the planning process are:

- IDENTIFICATION OF SETTING. Describe the specific educational setting or specific program for which you are planning.
- PERCEPTION OF WHAT IS. The intent is to focus on perceptions, not facts. Use your current perceptions and feelings in describing "what is."
  - -List strengths of your school-community relations (SCR) efforts as you perceive them.
  - -List weaknesses of your SCR efforts as you perceive them.
  - -List other factors or perceptions you believe are important to consider in planning your SCR efforts.
- IDENTIFICATION OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PUBLICS. *Internal* publics are those groups of people directly related to students or directly associated with the school system or a school building. *External* publics are those groups of people indirectly related to students or those who have indirect relationships with the school system or a school building.

-Identify *internal* groups that you feel are now being reached and the specific type(s) of planned SCR activities or programs that are being used.

-Identify *external* groups that you feel are now being reached and the specific type(s) of planned SCR activities or programs that are being used.

-List other *internal* and *external* groups on which you need or want to place more SCR emphasis.

-From the above, select the top *internal* and *external* groups to be targeted in specific SCR action plans that are to be developed.

- INFORMATION OR EXPERIENCE NEEDED. What does each targeted *internal* and *external* priority group need to know about this school or school system? What do you have to do or provide (usually information or experience) to help your targeted groups reach the desired attitude, behavior, or opinion?
- CURRENT COMMUNICATIONS. Educators have a lot of information to provide.
  - -How do people in your school system (service area) presently learn about your specific schools(s) and/or program? List some of the current avenues of communication you now use to gain support and/ or understanding.
  - -List communication channels you need or want to explore to increase support and/or understanding about your specific educational setting or program.
- STRATEGY TO IMPROVE SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS. Research shows that *mass media* is best for providing information; *interpersonal communication* (face-to-face) is best for changing attitudes; and *personal involvement and experience* are the major reasons for supporting a program or a product.
  - -Review current school programs and practices to see if any of them can be adapted to assist in improving SCR. List adaptable programs and practices.
  - -List other possible methods, projects, activities, ideas, etc., for improving your SCR program.
  - -For each of your priority publics, select the top two or three new programs or existing practices to be developed or adapted to SCR.

SOURCE: Adapted by Decker, L. E. from *School Communications Workshop Kit* and *Community Education Public Relations Guide.* Arlington, VA: National School Public Relations Association, 1986.

SUGGESTED GROUP ACTIVITY

Select one priority internal or external group and design a school-community public relations program to reach that group.

- State the project title and priority group.
- Provide a brief statement on the need for the project.
- What are the specific objectives or desired outcomes of the project?
- What procedures, tasks, and activities are necessary to implement the project?
- What facilities and resources (human, financial, physical, etc.) are required?
- List references or specific materials you and/or others would use for additional assistance. Are there similar projects currently being implemented? What individuals, organizations, etc., should be contacted for additional information?

- What is the proposed timeline for the project?
- What evaluation procedures, questions, and indicators could be used to assess the value of the proposed project?

VIII-4. Basic Steps of the Audit/Evaluation Process

Audits are sometimes conducted by outside experts and consultants with broad experience in comprehensive school-community relations efforts. An audit should pinpoint strengths and weaknesses, uncover needs, and give validity to further efforts in school-community relations and public relations.

The major audit topics are:

- Communication philosophy
- Goals and objectives
- Community demographics
- Organization and staffing
- Existing PR programs: products and activities
- Attitudes and expectations
- Needs, feedback, and plans

The audit consists of evaluating:

- Short- and long-term goals
- Priority of those goals
- Themes and issues to be emphasized
- Priority list of internal and external publics
- Community pulse on key issues
- Communication methods that are working
- New communication methods warranted
- Measuring process for future evaluation

The basic steps of an audit are:

- Researching — reviewing current programs and data on school and community.
- Finding out what "we" think — internal (management, policy makers, instructional faculty, and support staff) and assessing perceptions of strengths and weaknesses.
- Finding out what "they" think — external (public opinions on strengths and weaknesses).
- Evaluating the differences between what "we" think and "they" think— developing a balance sheet of assets and liabilities, strengths and weaknesses.
- Deciding how to close the gaps uncovered in the audit.

SOURCE: Bagin, D.; Ferguson, D;, and Marx, G. *Public Relations for Administrators*. Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators, 1988.

VIII-5. Evaluating Your School-Community Relations Program

Items to review in making an assessment of your effectiveness:

- Policy statements
- Administrative procedures, rules, and regulations
- Staffing and function of unit

- Budget and resources
  - -Personnel and support staff
  - -Materials and equipment
  - -Facilities
  - -Technical services, publications, audio-visual resources
  - -Involvement and assessment activities
  - -Professional growth and development
  - -Research and evaluation
  - -Special public relations projects
- Internal communication and programs
  - - Planning and implementation
- External communication and programs
  - - Planning and implementation
- Issues management and crisis planning
- Specific projects and local needs: staff size, enrollment, nature of community

INTERNAL PROJECTS	EXTERNAL PROJECTS
Community education	Referenda and bond elections
School volunteers	Lobbying and legislative activities
School business partnerships	Management information systems
Cable television and radio	Foundations and fund raising
Media relations	Bilingual populations
Print shop and productions	Other special assignments

- Accountability
  - -Program performance
  - -Long-range planning with new developments

SOURCE: Adapted from the National School Public Relations Association. *Evaluation Guide and Tip Sheet.* (conference handout, 1990) Arlington, VA.

RECOMMENDED READING

Bagin, D.; Ferguson, D.; and Marx, G. *Public Relations for Administrators.* Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators, 1988.

Decker. L. E. and Decker, V. A. *Home-School-Community Involvement.* Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators, 1988.

Kindred, L.: Bagin, D.; and Gallagher, D. *The School and Community Relations.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1984.

Walling, D. *Complete Book of School Public Relations.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1982.

UNIT IX

TRACKING ISSUES AND RESPONDING TO CRISIS

We live in a complicated, interconnected world of changing problems and concerns. Some school administrators, in an effort to keep up with the flood of information and conflicting points of view generated by those problems and concerns, have adopted business models of "issues management" or "issues tracking." These techniques, or tools, require skilled personnel and substantial resources if they are to be effective in an educational setting, because the issues that have the potential to affect education are in many cases broader, more complex, and less tractable than those that concern, say, a clothing marketer or computer manufacturer.

The popular term "issues management" may in itself be misleading. The *issue* may be a developing trend or condition, either in the school or in the broader society, that does or will or may affect the school's primary mission of teaching. What the administrator hopes to "manage" is not so much the issue itself—which may well be beyond his or her ability to control—but the school's response to it. One of the keys to success is preparedness: knowing which issues are already out there, and which are lurking around the next corner—and having a general plan for responding to them.

The day is long past when a school's advance planning for a crisis was primarily a bi-monthly fire drill. Schools reflect the problems and challenges faced by the communities and families they serve. The potential for physical violence resulting from weapons brought to school or assaults by playground bullies are realities in today's school setting. In addition to hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, and other natural disasters that have traumatic effects on children, schools must deal with the effects of divorce, child abuse, substance use and abuse, teenage pregnancy, unemployment, murder and other crimes, gangs, etc.

Schools have to learn to work closely with communities and families to plan and implement prevention strategies and to intervene effectively when crises do occur. For the school administrator, the focus must always be on what is best for the children, and for their education.

INSTRUCTIONAL OUTLINES

Following are instructional outlines and group activities that could be used by trainers in a variety of settings or by students in group discussions or study sessions.

IX-1. ISSUES MANAGEMENT

An ISSUE is a trend or condition, internal or external, that may, does, or will affect the accomplishment of your objectives. There are three types:

- Critical issues—these command attention now.
- Ongoing issues—these will be with you from year to year.
- Emerging issues—these are just appearing and may not be recognized as issues in their early stages.

The ISSUES MANAGEMENT PROCESS includes:

- Issues identification
- Analysis

- Prioritizing
- Strategy development
- Strategy implementation
- Ongoing evaluation and course corrections
- Postmortem and evaluation

The ISSUE PAPER is composed of:

- A clear statement of the issue.
- The issue's impact on the school system in some measurable terms.
- The position of the system on the issue.
- Analysis—what does the issue mean; why; background; possible actions.
- Critical follow-up date(s)—what will happen next, and when.
- Key contact(s)—who will keep the files and records on the issue.
- Other resources, references, and files.

SOURCE: Bagin, D.; Ferguson, D.; and Marx, G. *Public Relations for Administrators*. Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators, 1988.

IX-2. AN ISSUE BRIEF

An issue brief is a summary statement of the issue and its potential to affect the school. The brief contains:

- The date the brief was prepared.
- Description of the issue.
  Be brief and simple. Do not use jargon or unexplained abbreviations.
- Significance to the organization.
  Is the issue critical, ongoing, or emerging? List at least five reasons the issue is or will be of significance to the organization.
- Next critical date.
  Determine when action on the issue may be expected or required.
- Impact statement.
  Provide a simple, brief assessment of the impact of this issue on the organization.
- Potential ways to deal with the issue.
  Determine potential ways of dealing with the issue—there is often more than one.

SOURCE: Gary Marx, Senior Associate Executive Director, American Association of School Administrators. Lecture and handout. Falls Church, VA, July 1993.

IX-3. DEALING WITH CRISIS: WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU ARE UNDER ATTACK

When you're under attack, it is sometimes hard to keep things in perspective. You'll quickly discover the importance of having policies and answers to questions readily available. The experiences of many schools around the country show that it is a mistake to dig in your heels and expend all your resources and energy simply responding to an accusation. Rather, this is the time to think clearly, sort out what the issues really are, and illuminate them publicly so more people can take part in discussion, debate, and decision.

Focus on communicating your message and inviting dialogue rather than responding to accusations with a point-by-point rebuttal. Accusations do not create an information base on which to conduct a debate.

Sometimes, no matter what you do, things get out of hand, and an atmosphere of skepticism degenerates into alienation and organized opposition. If this happens, use the following guidelines to get through the crisis and back to your basic communications strategy.

- MAKE SURE YOU ARE CLEAR ABOUT THE ISSUES. Don't respond to rumor or personal opinion. Gather available facts and materials being circulated by critics.
- DON'T OVERREACT. Take time to review the available information; you may find that you can end the controversy by having a conversation with the individuals involved.
- SELECT IN ADVANCE WHO YOUR SPOKESPERSONS WILL BE during a crisis. These individuals should handle all inquiries from the media, parents, and others in the community. Your school and district should respond with one voice.
- BRIEF THE ENTIRE STAFF. No one who works in your school or district should be left to guess about what is going on. Tell them what has occurred, what steps you are taking, who your spokespersons are, and how they can help. Ask them to refer inquires about the situation to one of your designated spokespersons.
- PREPARE A WRITTEN STATEMENT that can be given to people who ask for the school's response. It will probably answer most people's immediate questions.
- PROVIDE AN OPEN FORUM at which the issues can be discussed and all points of view expressed.
- INVITE THE MEDIA AND OTHERS INTO YOUR SCHOOL. Provide written information for them and a "road map," so they know what they are seeing.
- DON'T BE ON THE DEFENSIVE. Freely respond and offer information to those requesting it. Be honest and don't stonewall. Speak positively and enthusiastically about what you are doing in your school and district.
- DON'T ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE INSULTED. You do not have a responsibility to respond to outrageous accusations or personal insults. When someone is in an irrational, aggressive frame of mind, keep your emotions under control. Don't accuse the critic of being out of control or irrational; tactfully suggest scheduling another time to talk.
- IF PERSONAL SAFETY BECOMES AN ISSUE, CALL THE POLICE IMMEDIATELY. Do not attempt to handle potential violence on your own.

PROACTIVE STEPS can be taken when a school is dealing with controversial issues or reform efforts:

- SET UP A SERIES OF MEETINGS TO INVOLVE A BROAD CROSS SECTION of the community. If you are holding a large public meeting, invite comment and limit the amount of time each person can speak. Remember, lively debate about issues is a time-honored American process.
- INVITE PEOPLE OPPOSED TO REFORM EFFORTS TO MEET WITH YOU. Listen to their concerns about what they want and don't want in public schools. It is not necessary to respond to every accusation, suggestion, and demand every time it

is made. Be prepared to politely disagree or to take comments "under advisement" if common ground can't be found.

- KEEP FOCUSED ON WHAT YOUR COMMUNITY WANTS IN ITS SCHOOLS and question anything that doesn't reflect your community. Find out if "national experts" are being brought in to talk to community members about what is wrong with your reform efforts, and who is paying for them. Whose interests do they represent? Does the vocal group represent the minority or majority of community residents?
- OPEN YOUR SCHOOLS. Rather than respond to each charge, invite people to see the changes you are making in the schools and how those changes are helping students.
- DON'T APOLOGIZE FOR WHAT YOU ARE DOING. Be clear that you are making changes you believe will help children learn to think clearly, solve problems, make decisions, and communicate effectively.

A CLOSING WORD. Educators who propose substantive change in public schools have an obligation to engage and inform the public. They also have an obligation to protect schools from being manipulated by special interest groups who seek to misinform the public or advance a narrow agenda. Even if no opposition exists, educators must develop ways to communicate, through a democratic process, with a wide variety of people in the community. Without public understanding, support, and participation, restructuring efforts will be difficult, if not impossible, to initiate and sustain. Schools need the support of the community to succeed. In fact, the greatest benefit of the restructuring process may be that members of the community can work together to improve learning for all children.

SOURCE: Ledell, M. and Arnsparger, A. *How to Deal with Community Criticism of School Change*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States, 1993.

IX-4. CRISIS: PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

Over the course of a school year, incidents arise that require immediate, informed, and effective response by school staff. The term *crisis* implies that an event affects the school community in such a way as to require immediate response. The response is necessary to prevent harm or additional damage and to provide emotional support.

A well-developed crisis plan has three phases:

- PREVENTION activities are those designed to prevent or minimize crises.
- INTERVENTION activities are procedures designed to cope with a crisis.
- POST-INTERVENTION activities deal with the after-effects of a crisis.

School crises include suicides, suicide threats, deaths from other causes, medical emergencies, and terminal illnesses. Such deaths or illnesses may strike the student body, faculty, or staff. Other events that may have wide impact are fires, natural disasters, and random acts of violence. Gang fights and interracial hostilities can also erupt suddenly and affect the entire school. An event affecting individuals or small groups may also require a sensitive response.

For students, the teaching of skills needed for problem solving, decision making, stress management, and other positive coping strategies can be very helpful. This teaching should be age-appropriate.

For faculty and staff, crises may be prevented or their impact lessened if there is inservice training to help the adults at school interact appropriately with students who are at risk for substance abuse, mental health crises, suicide, and violence. Long-term benefits can be derived from training staff to manage stress. Learning how to identify and deal with feelings about race, class, and ethnicity can help develop sensitivity within the school community and prepare staff to respond effectively to crises or potential crises.

SOURCE: Adapted from Virginia Department of Education. *Crises Affecting Youth.* Richmond, VA, 1990.

IX-5. Developing a School Crisis Plan

Many schools have adopted crisis prevention programs, crisis management teams, and other initiatives to lessen the impact of a crisis. Such planning initiatives can substantially reduce trauma, stress, and disruptions for students and staff.

The Crisis Team. Crisis teams can operate at the building, central office, and community level. Well-functioning teams at each level provide a network that can take coordinated action.

- Building-Level Crisis Team is usually led by the principal, with an alternate leader designated in the principal's absence. In addition to teachers, the team might include a coach, guidance counselor, nurse, secretary, and custodian. The team has the responsibility for:
  - -Establishing a protocol for dealing with crisis and presenting the plan to the entire staff.
  - -Implementing an inservice program for faculty and staff on crisis intervention and procedures for dealing with various crises.
  - -Cataloguing community resources that can help with crises and establishing liaison with them.
  - -Preparing reports for central administration at the beginning and end of the crisis.
  - -Providing organizational assistance during a crisis, including assessing the need for additional resources from outside the school.
  - -Identifying and monitoring at risk students.
  - -Debriefing personnel after the crisis and providing follow-up activities.
- Central Office Crisis Team. The crisis network should include a team at the central office level. This team might include the superintendent or someone designated by the superintendent, a representative of each of the school crisis teams, and other central office personnel, such as the director of pupil personnel services and director of school social workers. It also might include consultants from outside the school system. The central office crisis team has the responsibility for:
  - -Overseeing and coordinating the building-level teams.

-Authorizing resources for areas where they are most needed; for example, providing more counselors to a school whose staff may be overburdened in dealing with a crisis.
-Collecting training materials for the school crisis teams.
-Establishing a central library of materials on crisis intervention.
-Conducting a mock crisis event to test the crisis management procedures.
-Evaluating responses to crisis with a report to the superintendent and a plan for follow-up.
-Establishing a community support team and encouraging its input and support.

- COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUP. This component of the crisis network includes representatives of community and government agencies. Members might include mental health personnel, physicians, nurses, lawyers, judges, probation officers, media personnel, and clergy. These persons not only bring their own professional perspectives but also provide access to community and government resources.

SOURCE: Adapted from Virginia Department of Education. *Crises Affecting Youth.* Richmond, VA, 1990.

IX-6. DEALING WITH A CRISIS

- GET THE FACTS. When a crisis breaks, first, before you do anything else, get the facts. The key to credible crisis communication is the quick gathering of accurate information.
  -Direct all inquiries to one source.
  -Do not speculate.
- FOLLOW YOUR PLAN. Once you have the facts, quickly implement your strategic plan for managing the crisis.
- COMMUNICATE. Communicate what is going on, first internally, then externally. Basically, all the public wants to know is what happened and what you are going to do about it.
  -Use a designated spokesperson.
  -If time allows, prepare a statement.
  -Hold a press conference when possible. Provide access to all information available.
  -Don't be afraid to say you don't know something.
  -Follow up with the media to allow factual coverage; make sure student rights are protected.
- SEEK FEEDBACK. Ask people for their reaction to the way the crisis was handled.
- EVALUATE. When the crisis is over, evaluate your communication, your planning, and your successes and failures.

SOURCE: Adapted from Virginia Department of Education. *Crises Affecting Youth.* Richmond, VA, 1990.

Suggested Group Activity

Choose one of the following events/situations.

- Racial conflict
- Issue surrounding Family Life Education or human reproduction education
- Real or perceived food poisoning
- HIV/AIDS-related event or rumor
- Fighting between individuals or groups
- Vandalism
- Event in which one group feels left out or not represented
- Rumor or event relating to cult or satanic activity
- Physical conditions at the school such as toxic fumes, unsafe bleachers, lockers, etc.
- School rivalry situations
- Health problem, such as lice, ticks, TB, seizures, etc.
- Gang-related incident
- Kidnaping or rumors of kidnaping
- Food fight
- Student protest
- New school procedures introduced without adequate warning
- Inappropriate teacher-student relationship or rumored relationship

Develop (1) a crisis-prevention plan/strategy; and (2) a crisis intervention strategy for addressing it, including specific guidelines and procedures for a building-level crisis team, a central office crisis team, and a community support group.

IX-7. Resources for Crisis Planning

Most state education agencies (SEAs) have references on crisis management. Some sponsor statewide training programs on crisis management for school administrators, teachers, counselors, and other staff. Contact your SEA for information on available publications and services.

Two crisis management references are:

- *Containing Crisis: A Guide to Managing School Emergencies* describes how to minimize the risk of a school emergency, what actions to take should one occur, and what post-crisis activities are vital to the emotional well-being and future of students, faculty, parents, and community. The book contains a variety of practical strategies and two detailed outlines to serve as idea starters for implementing a comprehensive emergency safety plan. Available from National Education Service, 1821 W. Third St., P.O. Box 8, Bloomington, IN 47402; 1-800-733-6786.
- *School Crises: Under Control* is a 25-minute videotape documentary designed to help schools and communities develop crisis prevention plans. The insights and recommendations of veteran school administrators and school crisis consultants provide the backdrop. A "School Crisis Prevention Practicum" brought together principals who have experienced such on-campus incidents as deranged gunmen, hostage situations, bombings, and students killing teachers and each other. This gathering of school officials who have dealt with violent tragedies was sponsored by the National School Safety Center at Columbia University's Teachers College in New York City. The practicum was also attended by school safety representatives, a newspaper reporter, an education lawyer, and a psychologist who specializes in childhood trauma. By sharing the lessons they learned, the participants offer valuable advice to educators. Available from the National School

Safety Center, 16830 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 200, Encino, CA 91436; (818) 377-6200.

The following organizations publish materials for crisis management in specific areas.

- NATIONAL SCHOOL SAFETY CENTER. NSSC's goal is to promote safe schools free of drug traffic and abuse, gangs, weapons, vandalism and bullying; to encourage good discipline, attendance, and community support; and to help ensure a quality education for all children. The center is affiliated with Pepperdine University and sponsored as a partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education. It serves as a national clearinghouse for school safety programs and activities related to campus security, school law, community relations, student discipline, and attendance. NSSC publishes *School Safety Newsjournal*; a bi-monthly *School Safety Update* newsletter; and publications and special reports. For an listing of publications, services, and subscription costs contact: National School Safety Center, Pepperdine University, 4165 Thousand Oaks Blvd., Suite 290, Westlake Village, CA 91362; 805-373-9977; fax 805-373-9277.
- YOUTH AND FAMILY VIOLENCE. Numerous national, state, and local information sources offer reference materials, training assistance, and programs that address the escalation of youth and family violence in our society. A few national sources are:
  - -American Youth Work Center, 1725 N Street, Suite 302, Washington, DC 20036; 202-785-0764; fax 202-728-0657.
  - -Center for Disease Control, Division of Violence Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, K-60, 4770 Buford Highway NE, Atlanta, GA 30341-3724; 404-488-4646.
  - -Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, University of Colorado, Box 442, Boulder, CO 80309-0442; 303-492-1032.
  - -Children's Defense Fund, 25 E Street NW, Washington, DC 20001; 202-628-8787.
  - -Family Resource Coalition, 200 South Michigan Avenue, Suite 1520, Chicago, IL 60604; 312-341-0900; fax 312-341-9361.
  - -National Association for Mediation in Education, 425 Amity Street, Amherst, MA 01002; 413-545-2462; fax 413-545-4802.
  - -National Crime Prevention Council, 1700 K Street NW, 2nd floor, Washington, DC 20006-3817; 202-466-6272; fax 202-296-1356.
  - -National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse, 332 S. Michigan Avenue #1600, Chicago, IL 60604; 312-663-3520.
  - -National Institute for Citizen Education in the Law, 711 G Street SE, Washington, DC 20003; 202-546-6644.
- DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE. In the 1980s, particularly after the passage and funding of the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986, a wealth of national, state, and local drug and substance abuse clearinghouses, networks, training systems, and demonstration programs came into being. The primary national information source is:

-National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information. NCADI produces a 60-70 page bi-annual catalog of comprehensive information. To obtain a listing of resources and information sources about alcohol, tobacco, and other drug problems; ideas for solving them; and a series of national and state training networks and resource centers that provide technical assistance, contact National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, MD 20847-2345; 1-800-729-6686; 301-468-2600.

UNIT X

NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER INFORMATION SOURCES

There are many sources of useful information on home-school-community relations. The following sources focus primarily on the field of education.

American Association of School Administrators
1801 North Moore Street
Arlington, VA 22209
(703) 528-0700

Association for Community Based Education
1805 Florida Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 462-6333

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
1250 N. Pitt Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 549-9110

Center on Families, Communities, Schools, and Children's Learning
Boston University
605 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215
(617) 353-3309

Education Press Association
Bozorth Hall
Glassboro State College
Glassboro, NJ 08028
(609) 863-7349

ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management
University of Oregon
1787 Agate Street
Eugene, OR 97403
(503) 686-5043

ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education
University of Illinois
College of Education
805 West Pennsylvania Ave.
Urbana, IL 61801-4897
(217) 333-1386

ERIC Clearinghouse on Information Resources
U.S Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
555 New Jersey Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20208-5720
1-800-USE-ERIC

Information Clearinghouse on Service Integration
National Center for Children in Poverty
154 Haven Avenue
New York, NY 10032
(212) 927-8793

Institute for Educational Leadership
1001 Connecticut Avenue NW
Suite 310
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 822-8405

Institute for Responsive Education
605 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215
(617) 353-3309

National Association of Elementary School Principals
1615 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 684-3345

National Association of Secondary School Principals
1904 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091
(703) 860-0200

National Coalition for Parent Involvement
National Education Association
1201 16th Street, NW. Room 810
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 828-5200

National Community Education Association
3929 Old Lee Highway, Suite 91-A
Fairfax, VA 22030
(703) 359-8973

National School Boards Association
1680 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 838-6722

Parent-ING
(Information News Guidance)
Parents as Their Child's First Teacher
194 Strand
Coloma, MI 49038
(616) 468-5462

Phi Delta Kappa
8th and Union Streets
Box 789
Bloomington, IN 47402
(812) 339-1156

U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202
(202) 655-4000

National Association for Partners in Education, Inc.
209 Madison Street, Suite 401
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 836-4880

National Committee for Citizens in Education
900 2nd Street NE, Suite 108
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 408-0447

National Congress of Parents and Teachers
700 North Rush Street
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 787-0977

National School Public Relations Association
1501 Lee Highway
Arlington, VA 22209
(703) 528-5840

The Parent Institute
P.O. Box 7474
Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7474
1-800-756-5525

Population Reference Bureau
P.O. Box 96152
Washington, DC 20090
(202) 483-1100

Youth Policy Institute
1221 Massachusetts Ave NW, Suite B
Washington, DC 2000
(202) 638-2144

UNIT XI

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS CLASS OUTLINE

University of Virginia
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
EDLP 705 SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

DESCRIPTION

A study of the philosophy, principles, techniques, agencies and practices involved in a desirable school-community relations program. Special attention is given to the role of school administrators in coordinating system-wide and building-level communications and involvement networks.

This course is based on the principles of community education, which provide a foundation for home-school-community cooperation to meet the educational, social, and cultural needs of all students and citizens in a community.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Establish a vision or goals for a proactive educational system that responds to the needs of the community and serves all students efficiently and equitably.
2. Equip educational leaders with knowledge and skills that will enable them to:
   - function more collaboratively with the larger community and within the school or school district.
   - design and develop a framework and process for establishing a school-community partnership at the school site.
   - identify and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of various partnership programs and collaborative home-school-community efforts.
   - assess the local school environment and determine appropriate strategies for developing the most effective home-school-community relationships.
   - identify and access human and material resources in the community that can contribute to the motivation of students and the enrichment of the curriculum.
   - demonstrate holistic thinking from both a personal and policy perspective.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Bagin, D.; Ferguson, D.; and Marx, G. *Public Relations for Administrators*, Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators, 1988.

Decker, L. E. and Associates. *Home-School-Community Relations Trainers Manual and Study Guide*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1994.

RESERVED TEXT

Pennsylvania School Boards Association. *Schools-Community: Guidelines for Effective Communication*. Harrisburg, PA, 1986.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS/ACTIVITIES/EXPECTATIONS

It is assumed that students enrolled in the course will be self-directed learners who actively participate in collaborative learning. Class participation is expected in (a) doing team research on school-community relations in their institutional setting; (b) making presentations in class; and (c) taking part in class discussions and simulations.

A. **Required**. Reading of required texts and related handouts to enable student to discuss the topics or issues identified. Participation in class discussions and activities.

B. **Required.** Select **one** of the following assignments.
Two or three individuals are encouraged to work together as a team. Teams will be formed during class to avoid duplications, if possible. Each team will make a brief (10 minute) class presentation.

B1. SCHOOL SYSTEM POLICIES AND PRACTICES
Examine one school system's policies, practices, and programs to determine "what is" in relation to school-community relations and to identify strengths and weaknesses. Interviews with at least three different role-group representatives are recommended (e.g., central office administrator, supervisor, principal, teacher, school board member, etc.). Write a paper summarizing the findings. If possible, collect samples of school-community relations publications and products to show during your presentation.

OR

B2. SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS PAPER OR PROJECT
Select a topic related to school-community relations and your professional interests. Write a research paper or a policy position paper or design a special school-community partnership project with recommendations for implementation. For example, produce a written strategic plan for developing a school-community relations initiative at your own school site.

C. **Required**. Description of a Drug and Substance Abuse Program
Select one school system and examine in depth its drug and substance abuse program. Evaluate its cooperation and collaboration with other community agencies. Write a paper summarizing your findings.

D. **Required**. Portfolio
Submit a personal journal/portfolio at the end of the course that includes:
- reflective reactions to readings, lectures, and other learning activities.
- class notes.
- list of readings completed during the course.
- products produced as part of group work.

- assessment of presentations and analysis of group process.
- self-assessment related to what was learned in the course.

GRADING

A. School System Report or Project Paper	20%
B. Drug and Substance Abuse Paper	20%
C. Class Participation and Team Presentation	20%
D. Student Assessment and Portfolio	40%

Student assessment will be based on the following criteria:

- participation in collaborative learning and group presentation activities.
- portfolio review.

Objectives of group work. Teamwork is essential to collaboration. In group activities, students learn and evaluate group process through the completion of a specific group task. Each group or team will decide how to complete and present its work. Students will write a self-assessment of their group work:

- evaluating their own participation in small-group work and their ability to work with other group members.
- analyzing elements of group process.
- assessing their increased awareness in small-group interactions.

CONTENT AREAS

UNIT I. BASIC CONCEPTS OF HOME-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

1. Education Reform/Restructuring
   a. Economics
   b. Global Interdependency
   c. Search for Democracy
   d. National and State Educational Reform Efforts
2. School-Community Issues Attitudinal Survey and Community Analysis
3. Knowing Your Community and Effective Communities
4. National and State Status and Standards
5. Concepts, Values, and Definitions
   a. Community Education Philosophy and Public Relations Initiatives
   b. Effective School Public Relations Programs
   c. Community Involvement and Participation
   d. Home-School-Community Relations Strategies
   e. Personal Public Relations and Public Speaking

UNIT II. DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS THAT AFFECT PUBLIC EDUCATION

1. Population Shifts; Family and Household Change
2. Poverty and Other Demographic Issues
3. Special Considerations, Family Issues, and High Risk Groups
4. Information Sources for Demographic and Statistical Data

UNIT III. SCHOOL AND HOME AS PARTNERS

1. Identification of Audiences: Internal and External Publics
2. Sources and Influences of Confidence in Schools
3. Building Public Confidence in Our Schools
4. Teacher and Staff Morale
5. Involving Parents: The Evidence and Barriers
6. Strategies for Reducing Home-School Involvement Barriers
7. Taking Stock and Types of Parent Involvement, Examples, and Outcomes
8. Climate Inventory and Needs Assessment
9. Principles for Developing a Family-School Partnership

UNIT IV. ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

1. Advisory Committee Guidelines and Effective Meetings
2. Basic Needs of People in Groups
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5. Ways to Destroy Citizen Councils
6. Developing and Coordinating School Volunteer Programs
7. Attracting, Training, and Retaining Volunteers

UNIT V. COMMUNITY POWER STRUCTURE AND POLITICAL REALITIES

1. The Politics of Education
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3. Power — Politics — Policies
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6. Identification of Community Power Structure
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11. Power and Politics for the School Administrator
12. Realities of the Political Process

UNIT VI. PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

1. Types of Collaboration: Definition and Factors Influencing Success
2. A Continuum of School-Community Partnerships
2. Strategies for and Barriers to Collaboration
4. Communities Where Learning Can Happen: A Vision and Characteristics
5. Toward a Profamily School
6. Characteristics of Successful Coalitions and Collaborative Services
7. Criteria for School-Linked Services
8. Qualities and Skills of Collaborative Leaders

9. Ways Business Can Support Family Involvement
10. Lessons of Successful Programs

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3. Key Communicators
4. Communicating Meaning
5. Mass Communication Versus Interpersonal Communication
6. Using Technology in Public Relations and Communications
7. Improving Written Communication
8. Improving Your Publications
9. Newsletter Tips
10. School Publications
11. Special Publications
12. Public Relations Glossary
13. Preparing a News Release
14. Guidelines for Good Press Relations
15. Mass Media Relations and Rules

UNIT VIII. PLANNING AND EVALUATING A PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

1. The Basic Steps of Planning
2. How to Develop a Public Relations Programs
3. School-Community Relations Planning
4. Basic Steps of the Audit/Evaluation Process
5. Evaluating Your School-Community Relations Program

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1. Issue Identification and Management
2. Crisis Management: Prevention and Intervention
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REQUEST FOR READER'S FEEDBACK
on
HOME-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS: Trainers Manual and Study Guide

To the Reader:

I plan to update *Home-School-Community Relations* publication when warranted. I would appreciate receiving your comments about the usefulness of the publication, recommendations for improvement and suggestions for new material to be included or for updating the present contents.

Individuals who respond to this request will receive a complimentary copy of the revised edition as well as be cited appropriately as sources or contributors. Please mail your comments and suggestions together with your name and mailing address to:

Larry E. Decker
University of Virginia
Curry School of Education
405 Emmet Street, Ruffner Hall
Charlottesville, VA 22903

Sincerely,

Larry E. Decker

Larry E. Decker
March 1994